Volume LXXXVIII No. 6 April 26, 1968 30 cents

commonweal

St. Charles Seminary Library
Carthagena Station
Celina, Ohio

MARX AND RELIGION

Louis Dupré
Benjamin Page

MY BROTHER, THE WITNESS

Daniel Berrigan

CANADA'S SWINGING NEW PRIME MINISTER

John David Hamilton

EUGENE McCARTHY'S CHANCES

NEWSPAPER
A-3505 12-68
ST CHARLES SEM LIBRARY
CARTHAGENA STATION
CELINA OH 45822

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEWS AND VIEWS

The challenge is long-standing, and outlined anew in *Living Worship*, a Liturgical Conference publication:

"If [the liturgical assembly] is to be a sign of purpose and meaning and love, . . . the community's offering of itself must take flesh not only in the bread and wine, but also in the direction of its money and its time and its concerns and energies. As long as pressing human problems are not the clear focus of this direction, the gospel will be unpersuasive to all and incredible to many."

Living Worship notes how selfish the present system is, with the offering of the people meaning primarily upkeep of the establishment: "How does this fit into the celebration of a gospel that turns us out from private, narcissistic interests toward the achievement of a universal good?" it asks. *Living Worship* sums up:

"The Church can possess no compelling credibility as witness to the gospel until it puts its money where its best mouths are."

At last, counsel such as this is being taken seriously in the American Church, in degree to hearten most critics. In response first to the Kerner Report, then to the assassination of Martin Luther King, a number of dioceses are acting.

The Diocese of Pittsburgh has announced a program to tithe 10 percent of contributions and bequests to help finance housing and other projects for the poor. The Diocese of Providence plans an apartment complex, which may cost as much as $3 million, in a renewal area. The Archdiocese of New York will turn Dunwoodie, its seminary in Yonkers, into a day-camp for slum youths during the summer months. The Archdiocese of Detroit is upping commitments, already strong, on housing and jobs. The Archdiocese of Baltimore has made a $100,000 no-strings grant to fund inner-city programs to be run by ghetto residents themselves.

More is being done in other dioceses, but not so much anywhere that the American Church can gracefully accept congratulations. The long years of neglect and complacency do not allow that indulgence. Nevertheless a start has been made, and if the commitment sustains itself, it may some day be possible to relieve conscience over the past with reflection on what was done after the will was asserted.

However the memory will always haunt that it took a national tragedy to motivate what all along should have been instinctive Christianity.

•

The summer, it seems, can't get too hot for Will & Baumer Candle Co. of Syracuse, makers of vigil lights. In a letter to religious goods dealers, the firm writes:

"Since the best foretelling promises that the months ahead will be unsettling —the times troubling—those who find comfort in the votive use of candles will have more reason to want Vigil Lights than at any time in the recent past. The best estimates, then, would indicate that the time is right for selling . . ."

For the hesitant, Will & Baumer adds the clincher: "That's not all—the opportunity for 'related item' selling is probably greater with Vigil Lights than with any other group of candles. There are Votive Glasses and Votive Stands and the larger glass-enclosed . . ." Well, you get the idea.

•

The New York *Times* continues to belabor the "Man for all Seasons" idea (new sample: A MACHINE FOR ALL SEASONS—headline on an April 7 Russell Baker column). But the Cliché of the Month Award went to Agriculture Secretary Orville Freeman when he declared April turkey month, under the slogan: "Turkey, Food For All Seasons."

•

It is the type comment to haunt the sensitive man to his grave, but perhaps not Senator Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia.

Taking the Senate floor after the March 28 rioting in Memphis, Senator Byrd addressed himself to Martin Luther King and the Poor People's Campaign which Dr. King was to lead in Washington:

"If this self-seeking rabble rouser is allowed to go through with his plans here, Washington may well be treated to the same kind of violence, destruction, looting and bloodshed" as Memphis.

Or, if you prefer, Senator Allen Ellender of Louisiana.

Asked during a radio interview what he thought of the assassination April 4 of Dr. King, Ellender snapped, "I'm not surprised."

Asked if he thought Dr. King's death would mean passage by Congress of the pending civil rights bill, Ellender sighed. "I hope not. I hope not."

•

Fascinating, indeed, are the figures on clergy departures released recently by the National Association for Pastoral Renewal. An association study shows that 711 priests serving in the U.S. left the priesthood in 1966 and 1967. They included 39 seminary professors, nine chancery officials, 34 pastors and 341 assistants. Three hundred and twenty-two have married; 265 are not now married; there was no report on 124.

Of the 711 who departed, 501 were diocesan priests, with 355 of the 501 between three and 12 years ordained. This would mean that 4.5 percent of all U.S. diocesan priests in that service category left the active ministry in '66 and '67. Sobering.

Just as sobering is the thought that the study is an incomplete one, covering only 110 of the 153 American dioceses and but 25 of 160 communities of religious priests. Which means, of course, that the 711 total, high as it may seem, is still short of the actual number of the priests who have left. A complete survey, sources guess, would bring the total well above 1,000.

•

Norman Mailer's description of his new film, "Beyond the Law": it's about police brutality, "about Irishmen."

JOHN DEEDY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Rosemary Ruether Responds

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: In Daniel Callahan's recent review of books by Charles Davis, Hans Küng and myself, we were all accused of shifting faith from the external historical church to some other more defensible realm. This is hardly an innovation, but in fact a standard distinction between the visible church and the "true" or ultimate church (which is revealed only on the last day) which characterizes traditional ecclesiology from Augustine. It is precisely a bad Post-Trentine tradition which loses this distinction; Küng quite rightly recovers it. Mr. Callahan seems to accuse me of even greater reductionism, of sweeping away all historical reality in favor of an untestable Spirit. But this criticism misses the whole balance of the position which I espoused. On the side of the "spirit," the priority of God over our "works" can hardly be denied if we are to work within the Christian understanding of grace, and grace according to the best theological tradition is precisely the "presence of the Spirit," namely God at work in us and in our history. This presence of God does not sweep away history or our works, but precisely gives them their true place. Under the judgment of the presence of the Spirit, our works are *relativized*; they are not abolished, neither are they absolutized. The presence of the Spirit breaks apart our self-absolutizations, but it does so by, at the same time, giving history its true identity, as finite, open to the future and therefore provisional. The historical church is not an absolute body, neither is it a body we can do without; it is a provisional body, a body which is relativized by standing under the Spirit of God, and therefore enabled to remain repentant, open and ever free to renew itself. Mr. Callahan seems to be walking under that strange Catholic either-or mentality which recognizes no middle position between absolutizing something and abolishing it; either it is a mortal sin

(Continued on page 191)

NEWS & VIEWS: 162 **CORRESPONDENCE: 163**
EDITORIALS: 163
McCARTHY CAMPAIGN ENTERS NEW PHASE: *Steven V. Roberts* **165**
HIGH COURT LOOKS AT FEDERAL AID: *Dennis Hale* **167**
LBJ AS MENDÈS-FRANCE: *William Pfaff* **168**
SWINGING PRIME MINISTER: *John David Hamilton* **169**
MARX AND RELIGION: AN IMPOSSIBLE MARRIAGE: *Louis Dupré* **171**
INCESTUOUS DIALOGUE: *Benjamin Page* **176**
MY BROTHER, THE WITNESS: *Daniel Berrigan* **180**
HOCHHUTH'S CHURCHILL: *Michael M. Dorcy*
THE SCREEN: *Philip T. Hartung* **184**
BOOKS: 185

JAMES O'GARA: *Editor*
DANIEL CALLAHAN: *Executive Editor* JOHN DEEDY: *Managing Editor*
PETER STEINFELS: *Associate Editor* OONA SULLIVAN: *Associate Editor*
ANNE ROBERTSON: *Editorial Assistant* JONATHAN EISEN: *Editorial Assistant*
MICHAEL NOVAK: *Associate Editor (At Large)* WILFRID SHEED: *Books*
JOHN SIMON: *Drama* PHILIP T. HARTUNG: *Movies* JOHN FANDEL: *Poetry*
ROBERT BARRAT: *Paris* GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN: *Rome* J. M. CAMERON: *Great Britain*
EDWARD S. SKILLIN: *Publisher*
JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

COMMONWEAL A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature and the Arts. Second-class postage paid in Philadelphia, Pa. Printed in the USA and published weekly, except biweekly Christmas-New Year's and July-September, by Commonweal Publishing Co, 232 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10016 MUrray Hill 3-2042. Copyright © 1968 Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc. US and Canada, $9 a year. Foreign $11.

REPUBLICAN ALTERNATIVES

Perspective is everything. We recall the case of a friend during the 1952 election, a man who lived his life very much within the limits of Greenwich Village and a Village crowd. What everyone else that year saw as a contest between Dwight D. Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson, he saw as a lively struggle between Stevenson and Socialist candidate Darlington Hoopes. In his world, he explained, he had never met anyone who was for Eisenhower.

Such a distortion in perspective is not uncommon, and it would be easy to make a similar mistake right now. In the light of President Johnson's withdrawal from the race, most of us gaze fixedly at Eugene McCarthy, Bobby Kennedy, Hubert Humphrey; the efforts of each to upstage his rivals compels our attention. But there are, remember, people who don't like Eugene McCarthy precisely because they think he is too much like Adlai Stevenson, people who don't like Bobby because he needs a haircut, people who don't like Hubert Humphrey because he talks too much. There *is* a Republican stage, and on it Richard Nixon is alone in the spotlight since Romney withdrew and Rockefeller decided to be "available" but not to enter any primaries. At the risk of being obvious, then, one must note that the ultimately crucial contest is not so much the one between the Democratic hopefuls, important as that is, but the race between the Democratic winner and the Republican candidate.

Should that candidate be Richard Nixon? In one sense it is a temptation to say "yes." Our sympathies are "liberal"; even more important, we are dead-set against the war in Vietnam. Predicting what will happen in the fall is risky, but at this point Nixon looks like the weakest candidate the GOP could put up, easily beatable by any one of the Democratic candidates, if the Harris poll is to be believed. So the temptation is to rejoice at Nixon's candidacy—hurrah for our side. Reflection and sober reason, though, argue otherwise. The failure

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the Republican party to offer a reasonable alternative has been one of the great weaknesses in modern American politics. The Eisenhower interlude was, of course, a pure fluke, based on the popularity of a wartime hero, and it proved nothing and changed nothing. More typical is the current failure of Senate minority leader Everett Dirksen to lead any kind of sustained and coherent opposition to Democratic policies. What this kind of Republican failure involves is a real betrayal of the idea of a two-party system, and this failure to present viable alternatives on a continuing basis in turn led to the desperate expedient of the Goldwater candidacy—an impossible effort to turn the clock back to pre-New Deal days.

If they are to look like a party rather than just a faction, then, the Republicans need to present an alternative next fall who is not a member of the GOP suicide squad. Nixon is not that man. He is a loser; he is an overly familiar face; worst of all, he is committed to a war that the nation has largely repudiated. How can he possibly provide a fresh and appealing alternative even for those predisposed to the Republican candidate, let alone for those independents and straying Democrats whom the Republicans must attract in order to win?

In this situation it is encouraging that Governor Rockefeller is once more making noises like a serious candidate. A moderate party of conservative tradition could add a significant and valuable note to the political dialogue in this country, and Nelson Rockefeller is certainly able to provide leadership in such a dialogue. His stand on social issues is well informed and constructive; at the same time he has as the Governor of a powerful state developed constructive ideas on regional cooperation and federal-state relationships. For these and many other reasons it would be a national loss if Nelson Rockefeller withdrew as the leader of the moderate wing of his party. To avoid this imminent danger, two things are immediately necessary. First, Mr. Rockefeller must fulfill his promise to speak out on a variety of issues, particularly the Vietnam war; the nation must see what moderate Republican alternatives are. Secondly, there is the matter of the draft to which Governor Rockefeller says he is still open. Somehow, conservative and stand-pat delegates who prefer stalwart Nixon over all others must be persuaded that their course means driving moderates away in droves and with them all hopes of winning the election. The issue involved is far more momentous than any particular man's fortunes, and the important thing is that the election should provide a real opportunity for responsible, meaningful choice—which the Goldwater candidacy did not. On this score Rockefeller is preeminent. If he falters, however, GOP delegates should remember men like Lindsay of New York, Percy of Illinois, Hatfield of Oregon. Until the President's withdrawal, millions of Americans agreed that the prospect of a Johnson-Nixon choice was appalling. As matters stand now, Republicans should realize that things are only 50% better.

A British View On Martin Luther King

It seems only yesterday that I wrote a short piece for *Commonweal* on the assassination of President Kennedy. Since then there have been many more political murders, notably of Negro civil rights workers in the South; and American society, and perhaps the whole Western world, has been bleeding to death in Vietnam. And now there comes the dreadful news of the murder of Martin Luther King. Once again, I speak on behalf of virtually all Englishmen in expressing sympathy with the entire American people in a loss as great and as grievous as the loss of JFK; but this time my sympathetic feelings are tinged with shame, irrational but inescapable; for I am white.

It is a part of Christian faith that for those who die out of love for the truth and for their neighbors all is well: "the souls of the just are in the hands of God and there shall no torment touch them." It is a corollary of that faith that such a sacrifice, senseless and cruel as it may seem in itself, in some way works with the providential grain of human history. "The sick men of white society," as King himself called them, with characteristic gentleness and generosity, the murderers of Kennedy and King and Medgar Evers and James Reeb and how many more, are, we must believe, dust before the wind; those who endure are like great rocks.

Nevertheless, a great question is put to the American people in this and in the next generation. If we assume that the problem is to ensure that social and economic measures are taken to end racism, then the question becomes whether such measures can be taken without violating the sacred tenet of "Americanism"—without a radical attack on the principles of the market economy and on the institution of private property.

The murder of King, Johnson's resignation, the serio-comic reaching out for power of Senator Robert Kennedy, the violence of the American city and of American policy in South America and in Asia, these may be signs of a malaise of American capitalism itself. For money one can buy guns, cosmetics, fashionable clothes, automobiles, land, houses, men and women; and it may be true—time will show—that it is a necessary condition for reaching the highest political office in the United States that a man should be a millionaire. Can such a fetishistic religion long survive? And can a direct confrontation between the Gospel and fetishism be put off indefinitely?

J. M. CAMERON

(J. M. Cameron, English correspondent for Commonweal, *is a professor of philosophy and Master of Rutherford College in the University of Kent at Canterbury.)*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FREEDOM AND GREECE

It is precisely a year since the military junta headed by George Papadopoulos assumed control of Greece and proceeded to make a travesty of the meaning of democracy in the land where the word was coined. Civil rights and constitutional guarantees have been suppressed; 3,000 political opponents have been imprisoned, with many subject to the cruelest of tortures; there is evidence even that the Greek Church has been made a tool, with the long arm of Athens reaching out to block a ceremonial role in a New York baptism for Melina Mercouri, a regime critic.

The state of affairs in Greece should be well-known, but unfortunately is not. Last December a special U.N. subcommittee drew the attention of the Commission on Human Rights to the "arbitrary arrest, detention and ill-treatment of political prisoners" and to prohibitions on rights to assembly and free speech in Greece. And, more recently, Amnesty International, a prestigious international organization concerned with the comfort and release of political prisoners, issued a report citing brutalities inflicted on those jailed in Greece. But the true nature of the junta still escapes wide notice.

The reasons, obviously, are several. Tensions elsewhere in the world have obscured much of what is happening in Greece. And the comic-opera countercoup of King Constantine did nothing to quicken interest in the fate of the monarchy. Finally, the American public relations firm hired to keep the junta's image whitewashed—Thomas J. Deegan Co.,—is doing well (if, on occasion, sleazily) the job for which it was engaged at $243,000 per annum.

Some groups are seeking to marshal opinion and consciences in hopes of correcting political injustices in Greece. The New York chapter of Amnesty, for instance, is discouraging private U.S. investment, tourism and other props for the junta. But such efforts promise to be marginal in effectiveness, at best. The key to pressure on the junta is held by the U.N. and by governments having diplomatic relations with Greece, like the U.S.

U.S. influence has reportedly been instrumental in moving the junta toward a new constitution and in scheduling a plebiscite. But U.S. influence—as is usually the case where right-wing, anti-Communist regimes are concerned —has been cautiously applied, very likely so as not to jeopardize precious military and economic arrangements, and not deflect a course of events that suits U.S. diplomatic proclivities just fine.

That the U.S. should pursue such a casual policy and make its easy peace with yet another dictatorship should appall Americans and stir them into demanding that the political reassessments presently taking place in this country be broadened to include those procedures which wed the U.S. to every anti-Communist regime that surfaces, however embarrassing the regime. Greece is an ideal starting point. Then on to Haiti, Paraguay, South Korea, South Vietnam—the list is a long one.

McCarthy Campaign Enters New Phase

On the night that President Johnson quit, Senator Robert F. Kennedy flew back to New York. Immediately he and his staff started making calls to Democratic leaders around the country sounding out the new situation. Manning the phones were such experienced political pros as Ted Sorensen, Fred Dutton and Kenny O'Donnell, men who knew many of the leaders on a first-name basis and had worked with them for years.

In Milwaukee, Senator Eugene J. McCarthy also started making phone calls. He made most of them himself. He did not have anybody else. Most of his youthful staff would probably have trouble producing the last names of many influential Democrats. In essence, this is one of Senator McCarthy's main problems as his incredible campaign enters a new phase: the power and experience of the Kennedy organization, and the non-existence of his own.

McCarthy could get by with a makeshift operation in New Hampshire and Wisconsin. He could concentrate all his energy in one place and his hordes of student canvassers are particularly effective in primary states, where voters, not party leaders, choose convention delegates. Moreover, McCarthy was the only opponent of the war in either race. Now he has to face Kennedy in four primaries in five weeks, beginning with Indiana May 7, and fight for delegates in numerous non-primary states as well. He must, in effect, run a national campaign—something he and his backers did not count on several months ago.

The McCarthy campaign organization is amazing. It was held together through the first two primaries by Richard Goodwin, the former advisor to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, who had enough experience and prestige to give directions that had some hope of being followed. But now Goodwin—who only joined McCarthy because he offered "the only fight in town"—has recently returned to the Kennedy camp. That leaves a couple of the Senator's Minnesota colleagues, a shoe manufacturer, a Wall Street financier, a television producer, and a former public relations man for Americans for Democratic Action as his top staff men. Theodore White's books are about as close as any of them have ever come to a national campaign.

Moreover, some of McCarthy's most useful assistants had to return to school after the Wisconsin primary. One aide in the press office asked acting press secretary Paul Gorman—himself a hoary 27—for a note to her professor at Smith so she could miss an exam in American political parties. McCarthy's staff problems are compounded by his own indifference to them. He has not bothered to set up clear lines of authority, and the con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fusion is mounting. He actually runs his own campaign, but those decisions he can't make often go unmade.

McCarthy's second main problem is that his whole posture as a candidate has changed. Before Wisconsin he had achieved considerable stature as a lonely and courageous opponent of the President. Within weeks he lost both his loneliness and his opponent. He actually seems to regret not having Johnson in the race. He still recalls the cold days in New Hampshire when challenging an incumbent President and his policies was considered "somehow disloyal and unpatriotic," and tries, not very successfully, to recapture the crusading fervor those charges helped inflame. Moreover, the Administration's conciliatory moves on Vietnam have robbed him of his main issue. He still denounces the tendency to militarism in American life and the whole "process" by which foreign policy is formulated. But these issues do not carry the same impact as the denunciation of the "morally indefensible" war.

The dimming of the war issue came just after McCarthy was criticized for not making a more forceful stand on civil rights and urban problems. The criticisms were partly justified; when asked about these issues McCarthy had a tendency to say quickly, "Look at my record, I'm for civil rights," and move on to the next question. His lack of support in the Negro areas of Milwaukee was not entirely an accident. In recent weeks he has begun to emphasize domestic issues. On a swing through Connecticut following the Wisconsin vote, he advocated "new civil rights," such as housing, education and jobs, for the poor. His one street stop was in the middle of a Negro ghetto in Hartford. On his abbreviated California trip before the death of Martin Luther King, he concentrated on Negro and Mexican-American neighborhoods. But he has still offered little new thinking on domestic issues, and does not begin to match the infectious enthusiasm Robert Kennedy generates among minority groups.

McCarthy is counting on three things to overcome what are obviously enormous obstacles. The first is the effectiveness of his student canvassers in primary elections and grass-roots organizations in non-primary states. In contrast to his national staff, these groups have consistently performed little miracles of organization and tenacity that have stunned political professionals. Student organizers are already working in Indiana and Nebraska, whose primary is on May 14. After New Hampshire and Wisconsin one cannot underestimate their potential influence in a primary election. Cadres of McCarthy supporters have staged guerrilla raids on party organizations in such states as Minnesota, Iowa and Connecticut, and should wind up with significant delegate strength from those states. But the complex and undemocratic procedures used to pick convention delegates in most states make it very difficult to challenge the power of party leaders.

McCarthy's second source of strength is animosity toward Robert Kennedy. "Bobby has got to come on too strong—there's got to be that resentment thing," said one McCarthy staffer. Most voters still associate Robert Kennedy with his brother. They either like him because they think he will carry on the Kennedy tradition (or myth, which is more to the point), or dislike him for playing on his brother's reputation. On balance the identification probably helps, and Bobby does nothing to discourage it. But Kennedy has many enemies—for a whole variety of reasons—and that can only help McCarthy.

Most important, McCarthy is confident that he can win over the voters by convincing them he is an intelligent man capable of making wise decisions under trying circumstances. "You only need a strong organization when you don't have people who can make independent judgments," he told a crowd in Windsor Locks, Conn. In statements like that, McCarthy has an ability to display his enormous self-confidence without sounding arrogant. Indeed, his faith in his own ability is probably the main reason why he has done so well and lasted so long. He thinks he can be a very good President.

While McCarthy's ability to convince some voters with sophisticated arguments is one of his most important strengths, it also belies a deep weakness. He goes over well with the *Commonweal* crowd, but he does not impress those who stick to the diocesan paper. He lacks the common touch, as his disappointing showing in the blue-collar wards of Manchester, N.H., and Milwaukee indicated. His intelligence is enormously appealing to those who care about intelligence in politics, and he radiates a human warmth that can be very engaging. But he lacks the elemental, movie star charisma of Bobby Kennedy, and that is going to hurt.

What, then, is the outlook for McCarthy? He survived the week after Johnson withdrew, and that has to be counted an important victory. The rush to Kennedy among Democratic leaders did not materialize, and the nomination is still far from decided. But McCarthy picked up very little new support following Johnson's announcement. Most party leaders held back, and will probably throw in with Humphrey. As a result, McCarthy remains a very dark horse. Even if he does well in the primaries, it is doubtful he can go into the convention with enough votes to challenge for the nomination. However, the replacement of Johnson with Humphrey probably increases the possibility of a convention deadlock. The chances of stopping Johnson were still very slim when he withdrew; but Humphrey does not command the loyalty or the influence of an incumbent President, and it is unlikely he could win on the first ballot.

Thus the events of the last few weeks have probably increased the possibility of a deadlock. And at this point, a deadlock is McCarthy's only real chance. He shares Kennedy's position on the war (although Kennedy dislikes him intensely), and is an old friend of Humphrey. In a bitter stand-off between the frontrunners he could

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

become an acceptable compromise, especially if he enhances his reputation as a vote-getter in the coming primaries.

STEVEN V. ROBERTS

(Steven V. Roberts is a political reporter for the New York Times.*)*

High Court Looks At Federal Aid

In mid-January of this year, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed for the first time since 1947 to deal with the thorny problem of state aid to parochial schools. Its decision—when it comes at the end of this session— is bound to have important consequences for the future of federal aid to education. This is so because the law under review (the New York State Education Law, Section 701.3) is based upon an interesting expedient designed to circumvent the whole problem, and known as the "child benefit theory": instead of aid being given to parochial schools (and therefore to churches), it is given to parochial school students along with all others. It is an important expedient because it permitted application of the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, which had been bogged down in a mire of ethnic and religious rivalry. If the New York law is found unconstitutional, some other formula will have to be devised, or students attending private and parochial schools can forget about public aid.

The law in question requires school boards in New York to lend textbooks to any student in their districts, regardless of what kind of school he attends. This means, of course, that public money may legally be used to support students in parochial schools. The only requirements (and they are important) are that the school comply with the state's Education Law, and that the textbooks lent be texts "which are designated for use in any public . . . schools of the state, or are approved by any boards of education. . . ." The law was challenged by the Board of Education of East Greenbush, whose members argued that complying with this law required them to violate their oath to uphold the "establishment of religion" clauses of the state and federal constitutions. The New York State Supreme Court agreed, and found the law unconstitutional in August, 1966; this opinion was reversed by the Appellate Division, which argued that the Board lacked the jurisdiction to challenge the law in the first place. The Court of Appeals ruled in June, 1967, that the Board *could* challenge the law, but that it was not unconstitutional. From there the question passed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Appeals Court's reasoning was based squarely on the "child benefit" notion: the textbook provision "is meant to bestow a public benefit upon all school children regardless of their school affiliations," and any benefit accruing to the parochial school is a "collateral [i.e., secondary and unintended] effect of the statute and therefore cannot be properly classified as the giving of aid directly or indirectly."

The authority cited for this interpretation is the last case dealing with parochial school aid, *Everson vs. Board of Education* (1947), which held that a state, as part of its concern for the "general welfare," could pay for the transportation of students, including parochial students, to and from classes without violating the First Amendment. A state could not, however, contribute tax money directly to the support of a religious institution. The question, then, is clear: does lending texts to parochial students constitute a concern for the general welfare of pupils, or a direct subsidy of a religious institution? If the Court decides that the textbook law does not fall within the permissive category established in *Everson*, then the way is clear for challenging similar provisions found in most federal aid to education programs, not only on the elementary and high school level, but on the college level as well.

The ACLU, whose lawyers are handling the case for East Greenbush, argues that the transportation of students permitted by *Everson* is "different in kind" from the loan of textbooks, since the former does not have anything directly to do with the educational process, and the latter does. Therefore, lending textbooks constitutes giving aid to a religious institution in the performance of its essential task, disseminating religion simultaneously with education, and is for that reason repugnant to the First Amendment. The New York Commissioner of Education will undoubtedly seek refuge in *Everson,* and argue that so long as the intent of the law is the general welfare of students, any "collateral" benefit to parochial schools is unimportant and not unconstitutional.

The final arguments have not been heard, but it is likely that the Court will give special attention to the clause of the disputed provision which says that textbooks lent to parochial students must be "approved by any board of education" or be "designated for use in any public . . . school." This clause calls into question one of the ACLU's major arguments, namely, that the law is "forbidden because the textbooks are earmarked for use by and within the confines of a religious institution in connection with the essential function of such institution, which is the teaching of religion." But if the textbooks are approved by public authority, and are in fact used elsewhere in the school system, it is hard to see how they further "the teaching of religion" unless the school authorities are in conspiracy with some church. As the ACLU argument notes, "the constitutionality of the aid turns on the nature of the benefit and how and where it is used." It would seem that unless elementary math or history texts are pertinent to "the essential function of . . . teaching religion" then they are not unconstitutional under the scope of previous decisions.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The ACLU believes that the Court's decision to hear the case means that the justices want the law thrown out; if they didn't, they could have let the Court of Appeals' decision stand by refusing to review it. Furthermore, ACLU believes, the apparent desire of New York voters to keep the "Blaine Amendment" seems to indicate that public opinion is ready for a final, clear judicial verdict on public aid for parochial school students. Supreme Court justices are as sensitive to public opinion as anyone else. However, they are also sensitive to the "realities" of politics, and might just as soon leave the "child benefit" compromise alone.

DENNIS HALE

(Dennis Hale teaches political science at Brooklyn College and is an editor of The Activist.*)*

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

LBJ AS MENDES-FRANCE

Lyndon Johnson has summoned peace from the troubled depths; but will it come? Sacrificing himself, reversing—however hesitantly—the direction of American policy, he bids for a settlement. Do the North Vietnamese and the NLF understand that if they want peace they should seize it now? They have won. Mr. Johnson has himself become their Mendès-France. The President will not offer a surrender, but he does not need to. He, and the American people, no longer have the stomach for this war. If the Vietnamese Communists negotiate, they may end with a bigger success than they could have had at any time since 1964—or can reasonably expect again.

They must understand this second condition. If Mr. Johnson fails to make peace now it is unlikely that there will any longer be a significant peace party in the United States. Even if the Administration remains ambivalent, erratic, in its course, it today is set upon meeting its critics' demands and compromising the war to the limit of public toleration. If no peace now comes, the critics of the Administration will have been undermined. No doubt something of this is in the President's mind; it would be in the mind of any man who had been reviled as Johnson has been. Johnson the peacemaker will struggle inwardly with Johnson the about-to-be-vindicated war leader. If the peacemaker fails, having abandoned his own career to reverse his policies, no candidate will then be able convincingly to claim that he will succeed where Johnson failed. There will, in that case, only be war candidates.

But peace is what the country wants today—and what, I think, it will get. The Hawk-Dove debate long ago ceased—for the public—to have anything to do with the realities of the war alternative: years of struggle toward an inconclusive "victory." It had become simply an argument over how best to extricate ourselves from the war in the shortest time possible. The Tet offensive, the battle for Hue, and the siege of Khesanh destroyed for the public the idea that victory was, or could be, achieved very soon by war. They concluded that as between a bad settlement and a long war, they preferred the bad settlement.

I think that we will get the settlement. By coupling his peace initiative with withdrawal from the political campaign, Mr. Johnson made his bid wholly convincing, giving it unprecedented moral force. North Vietnam's positive response, thus far, suggests that its leaders remain, as they always have been, political realists. The process of peacemaking, begun, then is likely to prove irreversible. The international investment in achieving a settlement is very large.

And it always has been true that the world has been willing to go very far to get the United States out of this Vietnam predicament, given the opportunity. It is an interesting tribute to the United States that even those most hostile to what we have done in Vietnam have also wanted to save us from ourselves. For all that has happened in the last three years, the United States still enjoys substantial regard, significant good will, in the world. As with Britain at Suez or France in Algeria, we are regarded as a *serious* nation gone temporarily haywire, deserving help. This, as much as our ability to abuse our power, scares the world, accounts for the virtually universal will to ease and sustain these negotiations. Thus we may be extricated on better terms than we perhaps deserve.

The outcome still will be a bad one for us, but it may be so compromised and confused, and covered over by so much equivocation, that the American public will escape the shock of recognition. On the slight evidence that exists thus far it seems that North Vietnam will not try to humiliate us. They have privately acknowledged to American visitors that they understand the limitations of this situation; and curiously enough, it seems that there may be a residue of regard for America even in Hanoi. The old America powerfully gripped the imagination of young nationalists in the pre-war years. And our support of the Vietminh in the immediate aftermath of the second World War may still exert a paradoxical influence. In any case, the making of peace is likely to be so drawn out that we will have forgotten the beginnings before we reach the end.

But there still surely will be bitterness for Americans in what happens, and eventually recriminations against men and institutions. The government of South Vietnam, our creation, will be abandoned in fact if not in word. The factions and communities in South Vietnam which

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have resisted the Viet Cong must already have begun bleakly to look for a way to come to terms. This itself is another reason why the process of settlement is likely to prove irreversible: merely to have begun has consequences which cannot be recalled. But no doubt we will prefer not to dwell on these aspects of the peace, as we have preferred not to dwell on some of the consequences of war.

We will prefer not to speak the word "defeat." Yet this is what it will have been: defeat by international pressures, internal tensions and division, but primarily and decisively by the savage and uncompromising military campaigns, political warfare, terrorism, and endurance of the North Vietnamese people and leaders, and the men and women of the National Liberation Front.

The lesson will be of the limits of power, certainly; but that is by now over-familiar. More exactly, it will be a lesson about the limits of military power in a political crisis, and of the particular limits of the American military establishment—whose political insensitivity, strategic and tactical conventionality, and unimaginative reliance on "engineering" solutions and sheer firepower contrasts badly with both the French and British military records in this kind of situation.

The biggest lesson, however, is one of political incompetence, so that beyond any general argument over the validity of an interventionist foreign policy for America it becomes necessary to confront the simple question of whether the United States government is competent to execute such a policy even if it wants. Our national temper and talent, our moral isolation from the world, our intellectual and moral parochialism, provide the most important arguments against interventionism, with Vietnam the brutal verification. WILLIAM PFAFF

SHIFT IN CANADA

SWINGING PRIME MINISTER

American cities were burning, Johnson had announced his retirement, and the first delicate steps toward a Vietnam peace were underway when Canada's ruling Liberal Party selected a new leader and Prime Minister. The choice was disconcerting. Pierre Elliot Trudeau, 47, swinging bachelor, intellectual, *bon vivant,* political adventurer and—almost as an afterthought—justice minister in Pearson's cabinet.

The convention itself was the usual immense circus bloated into vast adolescence by television. There were bands, either natty or tatty but seldom tuneful, high-school girls in green, yellow or orange mini-skirts, placards, signs, buttons, buntings. The more insecure candidates cakewalked with cheer leaders or cheered themselves. Hospitality suites at Ottawa's major hotels gave away plastic brief cases, sandwiches, booze.

Many delegates were bemused, bedazzled; others were piqued by the inanities. Even as the cheering stopped, individual delegates were likely to express a kind of personal misery, never more than vague dissatisfaction with the pointlessness of it all. "Surely there should be a better, more dignified and, for God's sake, more *meaningful* way to choose the leader of one's country?" For the most part, candidates said nothing at inconsiderable length. Dynamic youngster John Turner, 38, tore up a major speech and replaced it with one saying he's "restless." Conservative cabinet member and tycoon, Robert Winters, solemnly told 2,400 delegates that the way to abolish poverty is to make the poor richer. Rural agriculture minister Joe Green's oratory would have fitted Lincoln's campaigns in the 1860's, but nothing more up-to-date.

The delegates met daily, comparing their beauty queens, discussing ubiquitous television—but tossing aside newspapers with uncomfortable headlines about terrors in the world outside. Yet the coincidence of Martin Luther King's assassination had tremendous symbolism at this most meaningless of political shows. The very fact that the media played up King as an outmoded nigger preacher, who had somehow become a quite decent white Christian, had a bearing on this convention as it had poignancy for North American society generally. All of us seemed to flinch from the true Martin Luther King—Nobel Laureate, intellectual, man of concern—the leader who went far beyond the race struggle and told us that the same sickness which produced wars also produced ghettos, riots in ghettos and empty political conventions. When Pearson made his farewell address, aides decided not to tell him about the killing of fellow-laureate King for fear it might upset him.

This, then, was the environment wherein Trudeau was chosen to lead Canada. Many delegates and Trudeau-supporters were dismayed by the traditional politicians who were obviously looking for a savior, a saint or, frighteningly, for an incorruptible, unbought, uncommitted leader. Trudeau replaced Pearson as Prime Minister before Commons reassembled on April 23, after Easter recess. A general election is not expected before September, and by then Trudeau will have formed his own cabinet and initiated his own policies. They promise to be drastically different from Pearson's, although Trudeau is no doctrinaire ideologist. He represents the party's left-wing and is supported by radicals, but he is a total pragmatist and a strange mixture—traditional, conservative, radical, individualist. He told his first press

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

conference that in his term as leader, Canadian foreign policy will be reassessed. Foreign commitments will be reduced; continental defense will be emphasized. Canadian troops are likely to be withdrawn from Europe and Canada's role in United Nations' peacekeeping downgraded. Will this place us even more firmly under America's defense umbrella? Trudeau didn't say.

However, policy fades in significance before the impact of Trudeau's extraordinary personality, so different from that of traditional politicians anywhere. He is a new breed of cat for us—philosopher, ex-professor, jujitsu brown belt, escorter of beautiful women, browser in Acton, de Tocqueville, Plato, enjoyer of rare paintings and modern abstractions, listener to Beethoven quartets and Bach. Above all, in his public role, television seemed to have been invented for his benefit.

Trudeau is slim, energetic, balding—not handsome but extraordinarily sexy in a Rex Harrison way. At the convention Trudeau swept past traditional political machines in a blaze of television cameras and fanatical young worshippers who literally fought to touch him. Watching the strange scene, I donned a button reading, parody-fashion in Latin, "St. Peter Pray For Us." It was interesting to note that Trudeau is of such caliber that he was not impressed and kept laughing at himself. Switching from French to English and back again, he broke all rules, violated all sacred cows, seemingly escaped any political commitment to party, political alliance, or program. So electric is he that I was reminded of Harold Nicolson's assessment of Oswald Moseley: "He was the only English politician who might easily have become Prime Minister as conservative, liberal or socialist."

Last Christmas, while his cabinet colleagues were frantically organizing leadership campaigns, Trudeau flew to a Tahiti vacation. He entered the race at the last minute as a superb amateur capable of mastering any problem and enjoying every second. "Everything's fun—sports, laughs, travel, books—I'd rather be the man for tomorrow; today's already half gone." Of the Prime Minister's dignified official residence in Ottawa, Trudeau has said: "It's a good place to hold parties." Asked whether winning was very important to him, he replied: "Not so very. But then Plato said that it was not wise to choose leaders who cared too much." A reporter asked, "Will you give up your Mercedes?" Trudeau replied: "Which do you mean—the sports car or the girl?"

Twenty years ago, after academic honors at the University of Montreal, Harvard, the Sorbonne, and the London School of Economics, Trudeau embarked on an 18-month *wunderjahr* with knapsack. He was in Palestine before the first Israeli independence wars; visited Rangoon during the Burmese civil war; crossed Indochina in a military convoy when the French were fighting the Vietminh; he was at Khyber Pass during the skirmishes on the Northwest Frontier; and in 1949 he left Shanghai just before the Communists arrived. Back home, Trudeau wrote books and articles, practiced labor law, helped found the radical intellectual magazine, *Cité Libre*. He became an associate professor of law, heaping scorn on the Liberal Party, and was a member of the radical intellectual circle which created Quebec's quiet revolution. In the autumn of 1965, sagging Liberals persuaded him to join them and he accepted solely on the grounds that Liberals could be reformed: there was no question that he would change to fit the Liberals.

There has never been anybody quite like Pierre Trudeau. He comes from wealthy Quebec bourgeoisie, literate, civilized, perfectly bi-lingual, at home in Paris, London and Papeété. In English Canada, he is the darling of the intellectuals as a "reasonable French Canadian" who opposes separatism and strongly supports federalism and a strong national state. To youth, he is an adventurer, individualist, young swinger in leather coat, sports car, and sandals, squiring beauties about town—a super playboy. To television audiences he is an incredibly compelling personality who always keeps his cool elegance and style. To professional politicians he is a dangerous dilettante—an unforgivable amateur who finds pomposity amusing and fails to be impressed by the great and powerful. He is also devastatingly honest, speaking his mind in an utterly unpolitical way. It was significant that when leadership candidates made campaign speeches, Trudeau's was the only one taking a world view, soberly mentioning the assassination of Martin Luther King and the terrible problems in the United States. Speaking quietly, elegantly, in alternating English and French, Trudeau outlined his broad general views on Canada and the world so effectively that one newspaper accused him of making an acceptance speech before the votes were counted. In contrast, his opponents—including seven cabinet colleagues and one former Quebec cabinet member—were determinedly trivial and vague.

Trudeau was elected Liberal leader—and *de facto* Prime Minister—on a Saturday. All day Sunday his face and voice pervaded Canadian air. In a long conference on radio and television, the press tried to find what he intended to with us all. He didn't say but he was very witty about it, quoting Cocteau, explaining that his only principle was "the countervailing course"—if the country seems too far left, he will go right, and vice versa; clowning on the television stage staircase, falling off, getting up, laughing and brushing his hands; grinning sardonically at old pals who climbed aboard his bandwagon; reminiscing about his rowdy intellectual past without a trace of repentance or reform; enjoying himself hugely.

He is our next Prime Minister and for better or worse things will never be the same again for anybody—including the opposition. JOHN DAVID HAMILTON

(John David Hamilton is a broadcaster and writer working in radio and television for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MARX AND RELIGION: AN IMPOSSIBLE MARRIAGE

For a Marxist, religious belief must always conflict with the truly humanist attitude

LOUIS DUPRÉ

Can a true Marxist be a religious believer? During an international conference of Marxist scholars two years ago, I asked that question of three Eastern European philosophers. All three agreed that Marxists and believers can peacefully coexist and cooperate. Two also thought that religious beliefs would be no obstacle to the adoption of Marxist doctrine. The third one, a highly intelligent liberal, had serious doubts whether religion and Marxism could be combined. His negative answer, however, was not based upon the materialism and scientism that are part of the official doctrine of most Communist states. All agreed that these apocryphal theories are quite foreign to the spirit of Marx's philosophy. The real reason why religion cannot be combined with Marxism lies, according to the one dissenter, in Marx's theory of action. Who is right?

It is obvious that the tension between most Communist regimes and the Christian Churches has softened. The expediency of atheistic propaganda is openly questioned in Communist countries. Political pragmatism has replaced dogmatic rigidity. Positive cooperation between Communism and the Churches now seems to have become a distinct possibility. The dialogue already exists. Does it also justify hopes for a full doctrinal reconciliation? Could the two greatest moral forces in the world ever join in the creation of a new humanism? Of course, such a spiritual merger would require that the Christian abandon some of his other-worldly detachment toward social problems and that the Communist become somewhat less simplistic in the economic interpretation of history. But neither one of these conditions implies the reversal of an essential position, and both parties could only gain by such a compromise. On one point, however, no compromise is possible: atheism must be dropped. Can this be done without jeopardizing the essential doctrine of Marx? According to some participants in the dialogue (mostly Christians), atheism was never an essential part of authentic Marxism. The latter rejects only idols: the refusal of true religion is, however genuine, incongruous with Marx's philosophy. All it would take, then, to reconcile religion with Marxism is to relinquish the spurious elements of both doctrines.

While fully supporting cooperation in constructing a more human world, I am less optimistic about a doctrinal reconciliation. Atheism understood as a denial of *any* God belongs to the essence of Marx's philosophy. A Czech Communist, Julius Tomin, put the matter quite correctly in an article, "Beginnings of Dialogue," in the *Prague Literary Weekly*: "Marxism cannot be content with a struggle which only touches religion but is unable to refute it or

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which refutes only the utterly reactionary and backward forms of religion. It is important to refute religion even in its most developed forms." This position by no means renders the dialogue with Communism useless. On the contrary, a more serious study of Marx's attitude toward religion could lead to the abolition of the speculative, belligerent sort of atheism which is still prevalent in most Communist regimes. For theory or practice directly aimed at the abolition of religious beliefs conflicts with Marx's philosophy. What ought to be attacked is the *basis* of these beliefs, namely, the social frustration which religion merely expresses and mythologizes. To attack religion itself rather than the conditions which produce it, is both ineffective and wrong according to Marx. Marx's own negative attitude toward religion was never based upon speculative arguments for the non-existence of God. He rejected religion because it was incompatible with his theory of action. That is why the sort of "scientist," speculative atheism advocated in the Soviet Union, which stems from Engels, Lenin and Stalin, basically conflicts with Marx's philosophy, even though Marx is indirectly responsible for it.

Inheritance from Feuerbach

It is true that Marx was an atheist long before he developed his theory of action. He inherited a speculative atheism from Feuerbach. But as his own theories grew, this atheism underwent such basic changes that the two can no longer be considered to be of the same kind. Feuerbach's atheism is rooted in a speculative theory of man. According to Feuerbach, religion expresses man's relation to his own nature, but to his own nature not recognized as such. Since all the predicates which man ascribes to God are purely human, Feuerbach argues, there is no reason why the subject of these predicates should not be human also. Man is his own God. The God of religion is an extrapolation of man's own powers of striving, thinking and feeling. Such an extrapolation is inevitable in the earliest stages of the development of consciousness. As long as man is unable to conceive of human nature as a reality that far transcends its individual realizations, he projects his own infinite powers onto a superhuman being. Unfortunately, at a later stage when man ought to know that the potential of the human race far surpasses the powers of single individuals, he nevertheless maintains this projective attitude. Feuerbach attributes man's strange refusal to reappropriate what is his own to an immature desire for sharing the humiliating restrictions of one's private existence with the entire human species.

In *The Essence of Christianity*, we read: "Man identifies himself immediately with the species—a mistake which is immediately connected with the individual's love of ease, sloth, vanity and egoism. For a limitation which I know to be merely mine humiliates, shames and perturbs me. Hence to free myself from the feeling of shame, from this state of dissatisfaction, I convert the limits of my individuality into the limits of human nature in general." The notion of alienation in Hegel's philosophy describes the dialectical opposition between the thesis and the antithesis of the dialectical movement. Feuerbach now applies it to the operation by which man estranges part of his own powers and projects them into an external, infinite being. For Feuerbach God is *the* alienation of man: the self-estrangement preceding the reappropriation of the divine into the human.

The young Marx accepted Feuerbach's view of religion as an alienation of man and never changed his position on that issue. In the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* of 1844 which inaugurate his own philosophy, Marx writes: "If I *know* religion as *alienated* human self-consciousness, what I know in it as religion is not my self-consciousness but my alienated self-consciousness confirmed in it. Thus my own self, and the self-consciousness which is its essence, is not confirmed in *religion* but in the *abolition* and *supersession* of religion." At the same time he felt that Feuerbach did not explain satisfactorily the origin of this alienation. There must be more serious grounds for maintaining man's self-estrangement than sloth and vanity. In an early commentary on Hegel's *Philosophy of the State* written under the direct influence of Feuerbach, Marx points to the social and economic conditions of modern life as the source of man's alienation. In fact, these conditions *are* man's true alienation. Religion is only an expression of it: man takes refuge in the phantasy world of the beyond because he is profoundly frustrated in his earthly existence. Nor is religion the main culprit in maintaining these frustrating conditions. For it is the political structure which legalizes and protects the social *status quo*. Feuerbach's theory of alienation, therefore, applies to the State more than to religion. "The *political constitution* was, until today, the *religious sphere*, the *cult* of people's life, the heaven of its universality, as opposed to the earthly existence of its reality." Yet, neither State nor religion reveals the roots of alienation, for these lie in the economic conditions of a society determined by private property.

How much religion is subordinated to man's social-economic conditions Marx illustrates in an early article on the Jewish question. His former friend, Bruno Bauer, had proposed the thesis that the Jewish problem could be solved instantly if the Jew would cease to claim religious privileges from the State. By doing so, he maintains the religious State in existence and prevents his own as well as other people's emancipation. The emancipation of man requires a secular State that recognizes neither Christianity nor Jews. Marx agreed that the existence of religion always indicates an incomplete emancipation, but he denied that religion is the cause of the

---

LOUIS DUPRÉ, *a professor at Georgetown, is the author of* The Philosophical Foundations of Marxism *(Harcourt, Brace).*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

problem and, for that matter, that political rights are the solution. Bauer simply identified religion with alienation and political equality with emancipation. But political emancipation is by no means human emancipation. In fact, political emancipation may very well coexist with a thriving religious life. "To be *politically* emancipated from religion is not to be finally and completely emancipated from religion, because political emancipation is not the final and absolute form of *human* emancipation" (*Early Writings*). The situation of the United States offers an interesting illustration of this point. The American State is entirely separated from the Church and Americans should, therefore, be fully emancipated, according to Bauer's theory. Yet, Marx points out, the U.S.A. is considered to be the religious country *par excellence*. Far from implying the suppression of religion, political emancipation grants man the right to worship according to the religion of his choice. Even if the State would suppress religion, its own existence would remain a profane expression of an alienation which in time would irresistibly produce its religious form. So, instead of being a remedy against religious alienation, the secular State is the purest symptom of its presence. More than religion, the State keeps alive the inhuman conditions that separate man from his fellow man and thereby prevent mankind from realizing its full potential. If religion means deception, the State is more religious than the Church. "The members of the political State are religious because of the dualism between individual life and species-life, between the life of civil society and political life. They are religious in the sense that man treats political life, which is remote from his own individual existence, as if it were his true life; and in the sense that religion is here the spirit of civil society, and expresses the separation and withdrawal of man from man" (*Early Writings*).

However, religion is not merely an *expression* of alienation—it also is a *protest* against it. In his "Introduction to a Critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*," written around the same time, Marx uses the famous expression that religion is the opium of the people. Yet, he adds immediately: "The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of men, is a demand for their real happiness. The call to abandon their illusions about their condition is *the call to abandon a condition which requires illusions*." The French Marxist Roger Garaudy concludes from this text that only the reflection aspect (the ideological content) of religion is illusionary, while the element of protest expresses a profound truth about the human condition. It would be mistaken, according to him, to describe Marx's view of religion only in terms of alienation. As an expression of human misery and protest against it, religion rightly questions the structure of society. Religion is false only in its answers, but it is most true in the questions which it raises.

Garaudy's interpretation is entirely correct, but it does not provide a legitimate basis for the continuance of religion in the Marxist society. Nor does it justify its present existence. For the religious way of questioning man's situation already implies a wrong answer. The right answer cannot be given as long as the protest remains religious. So, even as a form of social protest, religion can only slow down the advent of the Communist society. The first step toward a solution, therefore, would be to abandon a way of posing the problem which makes a solution impossible. Yet the abandonment of religion is merely a pre-condition and not, as Marx's atheist friends believed, the solution itself. Communism is much more than the atheism, even though atheism is a preliminary requirement for it. "Communism begins where atheism begins, but atheism is at the outset still far from being Communism; indeed it is still for the most part an abstraction" (*Early Writings*).

It is small comfort to religion that Marx considers it an authentic cry of distress as long as he does not take seriously the content of this cry. For Marx religion is a symptom of social disease, not an articulate symbol. To expect the symptom to provide a cure would be most unreasonable. Rather will the symptom disappear with the disease. Marx's distaste for Feuerbach's atheism does not originate in a more open attitude toward religion but rather in his conviction that atheism alone is insufficient to cure the ills of the human situation. Atheism attempts to cure the symptoms without eradicating the disease itself, namely, man's social-economic condition in capitalist society. Theism will never be compatible with a free society, yet neither is atheism sufficient to produce such a society. That religion must be unmasked as a deception is self-evident to Marx, but more important is the question: What causes man to deceive himself? Neither Feuerbach nor any other atheist philosopher ever seriously attempted to answer that question. If they had, "the critique of heaven would have been transformed into a critique of earth, the critique of law, the critique of theology into a critique of politics" (*Early Writings*).

The Atheism-Communism Link

In the important *Manuscripts* of 1844, Marx attempts to determine the precise connection between atheism and Communism. Again he states that a full reappropriation of what man has alienated from himself cannot be achieved by a mere annulment of God, but only by an annulment of the social structure of private property which produces the need for God. Private property and religion are complementary aspects of the same alienation, while Communism and atheism are the two facets of the same reappropriation. "Atheism as the annulment of God is the emergence of theoretical humanism, and Communism as the annulment of private property is the vindication of real human life as man's property. The latter is also the emergence of practical humanism, for atheism is humanism mediated to itself by the annulment of reli-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gion, while Communism is humanism mediated to itself by the annulment of private property. . . . Atheism and Communism are not a flight or abstraction from, or loss of, the objective world which men have created by the objectification of their faculties. They are not an impoverished return to unnatural, primitive simplicity. They are rather the first real emergence, the genuine actualization of man's nature as something real." Although the reappropriation process has a theoretical aspect, it ultimately consists in reestablishing the true relationship between man and nature, and this relationship is an active one, a *praxis*. For Marx as for the existentialists, to be human is not *to be* something but *to do* something. Not leisure and contemplation but work and material production constitute man's fulfillment.

It is most incorrect to brand this productive view of man as materialism. In a few remarks jotted down in 1845 and later published by Engels as *Theses on Feuerbach*, Marx clearly rejects materialism as a simplistic reduction of consciousness to nature. "The chief defect of all materialism up to now (including Feuerbach's) is that the object, reality, that we apprehend through our senses, is understood only in the form of the *object* or *contemplation*; but not as sensuous human *activity*, as *practice*; not subjectively. Hence in opposition to materialism the *active* side was developed abstractly by idealism—which of course does not know real conscious activity as such." Only the *praxis* holds both poles of the human reality, nature and consciousness, as well as their relationship, simultaneously present. All interpretations of man or of nature which explain either consciousness or nature independently of the active relation to the other term, are *a priori* false. Marx rejects such purely theoretical constructions as "ideologies." All idealist systems in which consciousness is the only active element are obviously ideological. But materialism is just as ideological, for any theory that considers nature independently of consciousness, in which alone nature reveals itself, is an abstract, mental construction. The only true philosophy is the philosophy of action, for the truth of man is in what he *does,* not in what he knows or claims to know independently of his active relation to nature. This is the meaning of Marx's famous dictum in *Thesis XI on Feuerbach*: "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world differently; the point is to change it." Atheism as a *speculative philosophy* is not based upon the *praxis* and is therefore pure ideology. It misses the *practical* origin of all ideas, its own as well as the idea of God. Its entire approach to truth is therefore wrong even though it accidentally results in correct conclusions. Its mistake lies in the assumption that ideas are independent of the social conditions of action and, consequently, that they can be changed without changing these conditions.

The recent emphasis on Marx's anti-materialist attitude and of his final rejection of speculative atheism, has aroused new hope of reconciling religion with Marxist pragmatism. To me this hope seems unjustified. For to open Marxism to religion it is not sufficient to prove that Marx was neither a materialist nor a speculative atheist. The very same argument which disposes of speculative systems as atheism and materialism, also disposes of religion. Any theory that does not have its roots in man's active relation to nature and the social conditions necessitated by this relation lacks the only possible basis of sound theory. Now this is obviously the case for religion, for in religion man claims precisely to transcend his relation to nature.

Is Religion Positively Excluded?

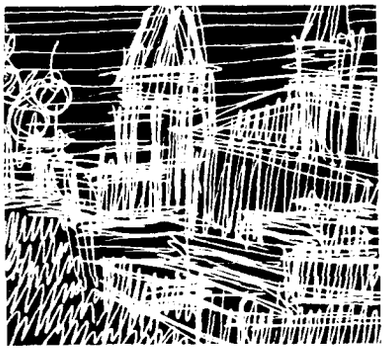
However, one might ask, does the absence of a foundation in the *praxis* positively exclude religion? Could one not argue that a consistent Marxist pragmatism ought to adopt a neutral rather than a hostile attitude toward any private beliefs that do not positively counteract the progress of socialist humanism? Such is already the attitude of most socialist parties in Western Europe. Why could it not be adopted by Communist regimes as well? Individual Communists have argued, like Roger Garaudy in *From Anathema to Dialogue,* that religion may have some practical justification in the fact that religion, as all ideologies, is a "project" and that all action requires some "projecting" in order to transcend the given and to anticipate a new reality.

Interesting as this acceptance of a transcendent dimension is, it cannot change the Marxist position on religion, for the Marxist transcendence must always remain *within* the immanence of human possibilities. Action compels us to project beyond the present, but does not allow us to project beyond the human. Garaudy himself seems to be aware of this, for he writes about the transcendence projected by Communism: "This new frontier of hominization, making of every man a man, questioning and creative, will mark a new detachment from the earth. The detachment, this time, will be from all the alienations which have been crystallized for thousands of years and have become so thoroughly customary as to seem to us like a *given* nature, like earth itself. It will free the spiritual energies of each man and of all men with such force that it is absolutely impossible . . . to imagine their nature and their use. This future, open to the infinite, is the only transcendence which is known to us as atheists." This frank and unambiguous statement shows how much the Communist has in common with the believer. It also shows why they can never agree on the basic issue, even after the believer has disposed of all his idols and the Communist of all his prejudices. The Communist transcendent cannot be God, for, as Garaudy writes, "it is impossible to conceive of a God who is always in process of making himself, in process of being born." The Communist transcendent is transcendent with respect to the present, not to the future of man. Any absolute trans-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cendence is out of the question. That is the reason why, from a Marxist point of view, religious belief must always conflict with a truly humanist attitude. Creationist dependence and full human autonomy are incompatible. As Marx writes in the *Manuscripts*: "A being does not regard himself as independent unless he is his own master, and he is only his own master when he owes his existence to himself. A man who lives by the favor of another considers himself a dependent being. But I live completely by another person's favor when I owe to him not only the continuance of my life but also its creation, when he is its source" Even the question of creation cannot come up for Marx, because it conflicts with the *praxis*.

Does not such a positive exclusion of an absolute transcendent constitute a return to speculative atheism,



and hence to pure ideology? Not really, for the independence of man which Marx asserts is primarily an independence of *acting*. Atheism as denial of supernatural *reality* is merely a conclusion concerning the independence of man's *being* which is implied in his independence of *acting*. That is the only reason why Marx supports his practical humanism by some atheistic considerations. If it were not for the ontological implication of an autonomous *praxis*, Marx would not even bother to call himself an atheist. For atheism is speculative and negative, while the entire attitude of the Communist is practical and positive. "Creation conflicts with the choice of autonomy: that is the core of Marx's argument. He does not undertake a metaphysical analysis of the structures of the real or a phenomenological description of dependent behavior. His considerations are not true proofs, they rather provide apologetic weapons to support a thesis accepted on a different ground: creation is not possible because it conflicts with the choice of autonomy; that is a postulate" So George Cottier notes in *L'athéisme du jeune Marx*.

For Marx the *praxis* is an absolute which admits no further questioning. The speculative question: 'How did man and nature originate?' is ultimately meaningless because it views as non-existent the very act from which all questions of existence must originate. Marx mentions spontaneous generation, but that is merely an expression to shrug off the problem. No questions of being can be asked *beyond* the *praxis*.

Two conclusions follow from the preceding. 1) Religious beliefs are totally incompatible with the philosophy of Marx. 2) Atheism, which was the original starting-point of Marx's philosophy, gradually lost its primary importance until it was reduced to a mere implication of the *praxis*. Primary now is an absolute autonomy of the *praxis* which excludes any transcendent principle of acting. This closed autonomy is what gives Marx's philosophy its forceful simplicity. But Marx pays a high price for this simplicity. For aside from excluding an entire dimension of human experience in which man knows himself as a contingent being, Marx's philosophy unduly restricts the *praxis* to a material production process. Space does not permit me to do full justice here to a thesis which I have developed at length in a work on *The Philosophical Foundations of Marxism*. But even a superficial look shows that Marx's theory of superstructures has unjustifiably narrowed his interpretation of action. Marxist man is autonomous only in his material life process. All cultural values intrinsically and indissolubly depend upon this original process. It is the economic character of the *praxis* which has led Communist theoreticians in the past to interpret Marx in a materialist way. The interpretation is wrong, but texts as the following (*The German Ideology*) on the origin of ideas show how much responsibility Marx himself bears for the misinterpretation: "We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process. The phantoms formed in the human brain are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises. Morality, religion, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men developing the material production and their material intercourse alter, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking." All claims of independence are "ideological" mystifications and embellishments of social conditions that need idealization. Consciousness is determined by social-economic relations, and these relations are determined by forces of production.

Yet Marx never denies the originality of consciousness. He says explicitly that man could no more establish social-economic relations without consciousness than he could be conscious without social-economic relations. The same mutual causality applies to the relation between nature and consciousness. Marx never reduces consciousness to a physiological or chemical process *of* nature. The production process which determines man's thinking presupposes an *active* relationship with nature in which consciousness has as much impact upon nature as nature upon consciousness. Consciousness as such is not a product of nature. The moment it becomes consciousness it opposes itself to nature.

Engels, who is usually held responsible for Marxism's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

later development toward materialism, goes even further and admits at one point a *mutual* causality between the production process and the other processes of consciousness. "Political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc., development is based on economic development. But all these react upon one another and also upon the economic basis. It is not that the economic condition is the *cause* and *alone active*, while everything else only is a passive effect." If this line of thinking had been pursued, the situation of Marxism with respect to religion would have looked entirely different. For in that case Marxism would merely have asserted the interdependence of the various levels of consciousnss as well as their dependence upon the economic production process. The thesis that all states of consciousness are *conditioned* by the attainment of a certain level of economic production is perfectly compatible with the acceptance of religious values. But that is not what Marx and Engels say. They claim that all states of consciousness are *intrinsically determined* (which is quite different from *conditioned*) by the economic production process. Even Engels' just quoted text, which is probably the most reconciliatory in the entire Marxist literature, concludes with the following sentence: "There is, rather, interaction on the basis of economic necessity, which *ultimately* always asserts itself." This implies that the ultimate explanation of all ideal values is to be found in economic processes. Such an economic determinism leads to unsatisfactory results in all fields of culture. To religion it strikes the death blow, for it excludes the existence of any reality independent of the material production.

The economism of the concept of *praxis*, then, as well as its absolute autonomy are the ultimate reasons why Marxism is incompatible with religious belief. Are they also the final word on Communism's attitude toward religion? The question amounts to asking whether Communism must necessarily retain all the principles of Marx's philosophy. Several have been abandoned already. Marx's prediction about the demise of capitalism and the proletarization of the masses, is one important example. Lenin's "adaptation" of Marxism to the Russian situation is another. In some parts of Eastern Europe it is considered poor taste to quote Marx on economic matters. So then, why could Marx's theory of the *praxis* not be widened from a closed economism into an open humanism? True enough, autonomy and economic determinism belong to the core of Marxism, which cannot be changed without deviating from Marx's basic intuition. Yet even Marx's authority should remain subordinate to the cause of socialist humanism which he brought to the world. As long as the authority of its prophet remains an obstacle to the further development of its content, Marxism cannot claim to have fully overcome the anti-humanist dogma of Stalinism. Communism in the past has constantly decried *revisionism* as a half-hearted return to bourgeois theory. But has the time not come to incorporate into its theory the changes which are taking place in its own living *praxis*? Such an attitude would ultimately be more consistent with Marx's philosophy than the rigid preservation of a theory which is rapidly proving too narrow to interpret the fullness of human action.

Christians and Marxists talk while the third world burns

INCESTUOUS DIALOGUE

BENJAMIN PAGE

Much is being written and said these days about dialogue between Marxism and Christianity. While it is true that each side is coming not only to know the other better, and—perhaps more importantly—also itself, I cannot help expressing a lurking suspicion of Europo-North American centrism that seems a part of almost all of the dialogues growing up. It seems that one very real element underlying the "'openness" to dialogue is an increasing coming-together of those peoples whose culture has been influenced and formed by Greco-Judaeo-Christian traditions. These are the peoples who first developed modern industrial techniques, and who now, on the basis of them —and the military superiority they offer—are materially the richest peoples of the world, and in whose milieux Marxism first developed, produced the Russian Revolution, and is now in the process of attempting to build socialist societies. This coming-together, however, looks disturbingly like a defensive reaction to the increasing strength and revolutionary struggles of the peoples of the so-called third world. Their coming of age presents a real challenge to the political, economic and even cultural hegemony which European and North American powers and interests have so long exercized over them—and a challenge to the Christian self-image of religious universality.

BENJAMIN PAGE, *a graduate student in social philosophy at Florida State University, just returned from three years of study in Prague.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The idea of dialogue seems to have sprung from two sources. On the one hand there was the desire of various European Christians, from both East and West, to meet and try to discover ways to prevent the emergence of yet another war on European soil. The efforts to work with and influence other, even non-Christian peace movements and governments within their respective countries were not only more successful in the East, where both official policy and objective economic needs demand peace, but brought two hitherto antagonistic forces into contact and even cooperation. The Marxists of the East, on the other hand, have been becoming ever more concerned with the problems of individual man—like the meaning of life, death—and in the struggle to build socialism, like evil, morality and so on. Christians have for centuries attempted to deal with such problems; Marxists, of course, reject the religious answers but see their very persistence as an indication that the questions are real. Dialogue on these points has helped both sides to know better the nature of the problems and the shortcomings of traditional answers in a technological world. Moreover, such dialogue has thereby contributed to the growing freedom and tolerance in East Europe.

The foundations of dialogue, then, clearly lie in European experience. The problem is that in a disturbingly large body of its literature this European base is not transcended. Often, in fact, there is no indication of the need to transcend it, to attempt to come to terms as seriously with, say Islam, as the two sides have with each other. How often does one hear of a Christian-Hindu or Marxist-Buddhist dialogue? In fact, there is even a tendency to project this Christian-Marxist, Europo-American centrism onto the world at large.

Thus Roger Garaudy, for example, usually proclaims that one of the predominant characteristics of today's world is the presence of two great conceptions—the religious and the Communist—which provide the meaning for men's actions and lives. It then becomes clear from the rest of his exposition that he is referring almost exclusively to the Christian religion. He mentions the renaissance of Christian humanism in our times, saying that in placing the accent on human initiative, many Christians are today returning to primitive Christianity: "Beyond the centuries of the 'Constantinian' tradition of the Church, a tradition which was at the same time both a close alliance with the dominant classes and the dominant authorities . . . numerous Christians today [are attempting] to rediscover the apocalyptic tradition of primitive Christianity, a tradition of a period in which Christianity was the religion of the slaves, a protest (although impotent) against the established order, . . . and not yet an ideology of imperial justification and of resignation."

But this is as close as Garaudy comes to what seems to me the main point of any real dialogue in today's world: recognition of the responsibility of the economic, political and strategic interests of the leaders of those states that represent Christianity (one might add, at times, Marxism) for the exploitation and consequent poverty, ignorance, disease, and lack of basic justice or of social and economic freedom that most of the world's peoples live in today. Most of these peoples are neither Marxist nor Christian, but without such basic material freedom, to talk of political rights or religious self-cultivation is meaningless. It is these conditions and the oppression with which the leaders of the Christian (and again, at times, Marxist) world visit those who struggle against them that is the major threat to peace, freedom, and further human development—not, as Garaudy implies, the technical possibility man now has "to destroy every trace of life." And it is these conditions for which we, the peoples of that small part of humanity now engaged in "dialogue," bear the major responsibility.

Colonial Exploitation

It is not that the countries of the "third world" somehow began to appreciate the benefits of industrialization rather later than we and are now trying to catch up. Nor did the colonial status of most of them, until quite recently, alone prevent them from undertaking development or being helped thereto by their "mother countries." Today's underdeveloped nations are underdeveloped and their growth rates are lagging ever more behind those of the industrialized states because their natural and human resources were used by, and in the interests of, European economic enterprises. Their economies, once largely self-sufficient or capable of producing enough for necessary trade in most cases, were distorted and oriented toward the production of one crop or resource, the entire output of which was processed in the factories of the colonial country. There was no surplus left in the colonies with which they could trade, as before, to meet their needs; all, including even goods made from their own raw products, had to be bought from the "mother country" at prices which included not only the costs and profits of manufacture but also transport and even part of the expenses of their own colonial domination. There was thus an absolute outflow of labor and goods, as well as the small compensation paid for these.

Nor, despite formal political independence, has the situation qualitatively changed. Local enterprises have, in many cases, been established to process local goods, but industry is still largely light and dependent on world market conditions to earn the money to buy what cannot be produced at home. But this market remains a function of the needs and interests of the affluent industrial, Christian and Marxist states of Europe and North America, in the context of which the weaker, largely raw-materials-producing economies of the former colonies continue to occupy a clearly subordinate, even subservient position. The prices they can earn for their goods are rising, if at all, at rates far below those of manufactured goods of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

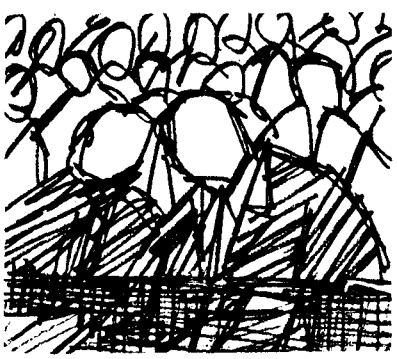
advanced countries. Thus the gap between the economic levels of the two is continually widening, something that both *Populorum Progressio* and the UN have recognized. Foreign aid may, to us, seem a way to help the underdeveloped countries overcome their plight. But loans must be repaid and require debt servicing, thereby keeping their economies tied to those of the creditor countries. Nor does foreign investment help significantly, because it is directed largely toward the development of market potential, even in cases involving local management; the bulk of ownership still resides in, and in the interests of, the investor country.

Resentment at all of this became quite clear at the 1964 Geneva Conference on Trade and Development, where "third world" countries raised the slogan, "Trade, not Aid." They blamed the advanced countries, East and West, for their present economic predicament, and demanded, in compensation, preferential treatment and unilateral, international arrangements for the administration of trade and for what aid they should deem necessary in their own, rather than outside, interests. It is unfortunate that American representatives felt it necessary to maintain their commitment to the more profitable, to us, bilateral arrangements on which we usually base our relations with the underdeveloped countries and to vote against almost every resolution passed in the interests of the latter.

Thus, when I say that we who are engaged in dialogue bear the major responsibility for the plight of the "'third world" countries and hence also for participation, in the efforts to overcome it, I am not talking merely about foreign aid and other such methods of help or charity. To emphasize such approaches to our responsibility amounts in the end to preaching to them the very resignation of which Garaudy rightly accuses "Constantinian" Christianity: it tells them not to struggle to take control of their nations and problems into their own hands, but to wait patiently for those who are richer to help. Without a serious recognition of our responsibility toward the struggles of the peoples of the "third world"—a recognition that can only be based on our willingness to forget our verbal dialogue and enter the struggle as true Marxists or Christians—the new humanism in which Garaudy puts so much hope cannot but remain limited to those who live in the Christian and Marxist lands where he sees it emerging—i.e., to the rich industrial societies of Europe and North America. Such, ultimately, is no humanism at all, nor can it last much longer or do much more even there, where it now seems so vital. For what is at stake is not the future of Marxism or Christianity but of the vast majority of the world's population. So long as both claim to be interested in the welfare of man, this cannot be overlooked.

The Czech Marxist, Milan Machovec, puts this Europo-North American-centered starting point even more blatantly. "Whether we are in favor of it or not, Marxism and Christianity are the two major forces in the world today." He adds that he hopes "We are entering on a great epoch of dialogue. Ten years ago this would not have been possible . . . If we wish to enter this epoch in more than just a formal way . . . full confrontation between human beings is necessary." Julius Tomin, a compatriot, makes this confrontation more specific, more personal: "After years of merely living *beside* one another, the prospect of being able to realize the possibility of living *with* one another, in deep involvement with the other, . . . and of participating in a dialogue, is indeed fascinating."

I should emphasize that, as a Christian, I am not opposed to the idea of dialogue—in fact it was to learn from the dialogue that has grown up around Professor Machovec and the theologian, J. L. Hromádka, that I went to Czechoslovakia. And I can appreciate the concern of such men as Machovec and Tomin for personal dialogue in the circumstances of a country where efforts are actually under way to build socialism and there is a



need to do more than just live with the other, Christian or Marxist. However, in the nearly three years that I was there I became skeptical when I compared the group of some 50 scholars, Christian and Marxist, gathered together in "dialogue" every Monday at the Philosophical Faculty at the University of Prague, with the majority of Czechoslovak citizens—especially the youth with their Western-style clothes, modes, films and interests—for whom the verbal dialogue here at home, to say nothing of the idea of building the worldwide classless, exploitation-free society, seems to mean almost nothing. Neither seems to them to offer much in terms of perspective or meaning. I become even more skeptical when I contrast the growing "'openness" to dialogue among the rich, white countries of advanced industrial society in both East and West Europe and in North America, and the growing rapprochement between socialist and capitalist Europe that is partly responsible for and partly the product of the new atmosphere of dialogue with the rest of the world.

What I am disturbed by, then, is the Europo-American centrism which the desire for dialogue seems to express and seeks to project. But such an orientation appears almost inevitable so long as each side begins with the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

proposition that it, even in its present form, represents one of the major ideological forces in the world, including those parts of it that are outside European and American cultural traditions. It is true that the initial world-views of both Marxism and Christianity were relevant to the non-European world, and in fact, antithetical to classical European cultural traditions. Both were originally oriented toward the downtrodden and oppressed, the hungry, humble and poor, for whom basic social and economic justice is the basic goal. Yet both, in becoming "established" in some part of Europe, underwent fundamental adaptations and revisions, making them acceptable to the rich as well, and to their goals of individual self-cultivation and free choice. But these goals stem from the classical Enlightenment and Rationalist traditions of Europe, and derive not from Christianity but from the aristocratic values of ancient Greece. While such an orientation may correspond to the conditions of increasing affluence in Europe, America, and, possibly Japan, they are still far removed from the needs of most of the rest of the world.

If the result of our dialogue were a deepening of the commitment of Marxists and Christians alike to transcend their European and North American biases, to open themselves fully to the hopes and the needs of other peoples, and to dialogue with their religio-philosophical outlooks in the context of their struggles against exploitation, domination and poverty, that might be one thing. Or, if that is asking too much, if the result were a deepened awareness of the need to oppose the growing tendencies in the Europo-North American world—including the socialist community—toward economic values (efficiency, growth, profit-incentive) and the economic valuation of labor, product and, in the end, even of human life itself, reducing men to the level of producing and consuming functions in the interests of the economic establishment, I might be more hopeful. But I cannot help asking how far the consequences of dialogue, such as that which Garaudy, Machovec and Tomin describe are likely to reach.

Economic Hang-Ups

Of course there are problems. One has only to consider the fact that most of the churches to which the Christian partners in dialogue belong—especially the Vatican—have direct financial interests in capitalist productive enterprises. To what degree can we expect them, as institutions that need money to maintain themselves, to oppose the exploitation of the peoples of the non-Europo-North American (largely non-Christian) world when most of their material resources are derived or supported from investments in the very industrio-economic system that maintains the exploitation? It is true that these days many Christians and Churches are becoming increasingly concerned over the ever-present danger of thermonuclear war and over the "local" war in Vietnam. But their concern so far seems largely moral or humanitarian. They seek to bring these dangers under control or to try to eliminate them as such. But what are they doing against the cause of these dangers, the determination of the supposedly Christian leaders of the West—especially of the U.S.—to maintain their positions of economic exploitation and strategic and political domination, by force if necessary, when the peoples concerned begin fighting for their independence and right to self-determination?

Similar questions can be asked of Marxists. To what extent are they willing to risk the breakdown in the dialogue in Europe and North America and the peaceful coexistence of which it is a part, that serious openness to and responsibility in the revolutionary situation outside Europe would very likely involve? What would happen if such a perspective forced them to join in the struggle against the exploitation on which the economic position of the Churches of their Christian partners in dialogue is based? In fact, I have seen very little effort on the part of *European* Marxists even to help Christians come to an awareness of their responsibility in this area; it seems to be something that "'respectable" Marxists in the dialogue no longer bring up. These, it would seem, are more legitimate points for mutual exploration than attempts, for example, to define and narrow potential areas of "essential commitment" which might block joint effort.

The politico-economic situation in Europe, both East and West, and North America, is now relatively stable. Both capitalist and socialist countries—and Christians and Marxists within each—are engaged in the process of improving their economic systems, rationalizing and making them more efficient in the interests of more economic production, growth and bettering the material lot of their citizens, and in discovering ways to ease tensions among themselves. In such a situation the general atmosphere is almost bound to be one of a growing introspection and concern for things pertaining to our own socio-historical context. As part of this atmosphere, there is bound also to be a growing "openness" on the part of both Christians and Marxists, as the two major forces in contemporary *European* culture, to dialogue with each other. The error is in the tendency of the participants to transpose what may be of meaning or at least relevance onto the rest of the world. There was little talk of dialogue or peaceful coexistence in the days when Marxism was organizing men and masses to fight for justice—when it was still revolutionary.

While the dialogue goes on, often inspiring deeply meaningful theoretical elaborations—at times even achieving successes in the area of individual liberties—statistics demonstrate that the gap between the economic situation of those countries engaged in dialogue and peaceful coexistence, and that of the countries of the rest of the world, is growing. The rich are getting richer and dialogue, just as "trade with the West," plays a definite role

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in prolonging this situation. It may be possible to build the conditions for peace among the rich, advanced countries with different social systems on such a basis. But peaceful coexistence and dialogue are possible only among equals; to permit its ideals, or those of Christianity or Marxism, to be identified in the eyes of the peoples of the "third world" with the problems of the affluent and the policies of governments that dominate international economics in their own interests is to jeopardize all efforts for peace between rich and poor.

The problem is not just to help the "third world" toward economic improvements, toward a larger share in the existing system of production and distribution and integration into the context of our dialogue. Rather it is to understand and identify with its struggles to eliminate the fact and sources of domination, backwardness and oppression. This, it would seem, is the starting point for the social action of Marxists, Christians or any other "men of good will," as well as of genuine dialogue. For the successful outcome of such a struggle will not only create a world free of domination and oppression, but will also lay the foundations for serious peace.

The trial of the Baltimore four

MY BROTHER, THE WITNESS

DANIEL BERRIGAN

("But everything has been changed today. Man, tortured man, lifts up his head and says: I can live. So much is gained when only one man stands up and says 'No.' ")
Brecht, Galileo

On the first of April, the trial of the "'Baltimore Four" opened in the federal court of that city. Eberhart, Lewis, Mengell and Berrigan went on trial for the famous blood-pouring incident in the Customs House draft center last autumn.

Three days prior to the opening of the case, the government quietly dropped the most serious of its charges, that of conspiracy. There remain two felony charges, that of entering government property and of destroying government records.

The night before the trial, President Johnson made his abrupt announcement of the mitigation of the air war against North Vietnam. We received the news as though we were surfacing with bursting lungs, after a long dangerous time in the depths. We had almost grown incapable of hope, or at least the kind of hope we were operating under was so close to fatalism, so emptied of emotional rewards; we seemed in these last years, to be thrashing about, trying to function without essential organs and limbs, feeling our hearts ceasing to beat. But suddenly we knew the onset of a new emotion, so long absent from our lives as to seem almost part of a myth. Was public decency possible? Might superman still be a man? Could we make it after all? And what of those patient, courageous friends of ours, in courts, in jails, in exile, preparing on campuses for the fateful choices the next few months would bring?

"Caesar must be served!" So the judge closed his books on the case of David Miller last year. "Caesar will never have me," David answered. "And to show it, I will sit down." He did so, and was borne off.

One bishop, Shannon of St. Paul, went into court with a young Catholic Worker, who was subsequently given a sentence of three years for burning his draft card. But in general, the bishops have played the war straight American. And the war's end will probably find few of them in any way interiorly changed in their understanding of the Church, of the meaning of violence, or indeed of their own office.

Which is not to say that the Church has felt no tremors. It is only to suggest that in the Catholic instance, the power structure has followed the culture, its sedulous ape. Still, in an exciting and even unique way, the war has altered the face of the Church as no former American war has done. For the first time in our national history, significant numbers of Catholics, including a few priests, are in trouble.

The war has also seriously thrown into disarray the timetable of renewal which the Church had set for itself. That schedule included beyond doubt the building of strong, open and affectionate relationships between the bishops and their communities. Alas, alas. The war has deepened and widened a tragic cleavage which issues like birth control, school systems, speech and its freedoms and unfreedoms, control of properties and income, had already opened. More seriously even, the specter of the German church of the '30s is not yet exorcised. Indeed, the persistent silence of the American bishops in wartime supplies another instance in a massive history of

FATHER DANIEL BERRIGAN, S.J., *is Associate Director for Service at Cornell University's United Religious Work. His most recent book is* Love, Love At The End *(Macmillan).*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

church-state war "'arrangement" marked by connivance, sympathy of interest and default by silence. Self-delusive rhetoric, regressiveness, sacral fears, economic enslavement; that abstract moralism of Christians which Camus scored during the Algerian war; the motivation behind the record is as complex as it is obscure. In any case, one has the sense that a time of Church breakup, much more radical and complete than so far imagined, lies ahead. And that the Vietnam war will stand as one important historical cause of further crisis.

I should like to think that with the restoration of normal national climate, war resisters will gain immediate amnesty. I should like even to dream that such men might someday be summoned by a future President to the Rose Garden of the White House, there to be decorated for heroic service to their country.

I see the back of my brother's gray poll as I write these notes in the Baltimore Court. The judge is droning on, angry and fretful, questioning the prospective jurors. The mills of the gods.

During the Second World War, I was tucked away in a seminary in the Maryland hills. We used to follow the war with maps and radios, a safe alternative, the worst possible method of making boys into men. The war never questioned us, it was no part of the sacred curriculum. We rejoiced and sorrowed and carried flags and paraded, even after Hiroshima. Such immunity from the grievous facts of modern war, a system designed to keep us "pure" of bloodshed, in fact made us apt for complicity in the very system it purported to free us from. It was a purity based on bad history; therefore it rendered us impure. But we only learned that later; and even then, only a few of us learned the lesson.

In any case, Philip fought in the war; he was a soldier's soldier, decorated and commissioned in the European theater.

(One prospective juror is an old lady whose son is a chaplain in the armed forces. The judge asks: would you be capable of coming to an unbiased conclusion in this case? She answer: I would, with the help of God. . . . It becomes clearer, as the jurors are questioned, that it is almost impossible to find an American who is not in some way, through relatives, friends, or emotional bias, involved in the war game. Which is to say, the war is, in the deepest sense, total.)

After ordination, Philip spent several years in ghetto parishes and schools in Washington, New Orleans and Baltimore. As I well understand now, he was undergoing the best boot camp training available to a dedicated activist. He was deep in the early civil rights movement, among the urban poor. There, he saw no point in taking the traditional isolated and segregated stance of the Church in the black communities. He was incurably secular; he saw the Church as one resource for human change, bringing to bear on the squalid facts of racism the light of the gospel, the presence of inventive courage and hope. He worked with CORE, SNCC, the Urban League, as well as the adult Sodality movement. He took a freedom ride, did hard manual work of all kinds, begged money and gave it away, fought to get Northern scholarships for black students.

Six years in New Orleans; then he was appointed to the seminary staff at Newburgh. The war had broken in a fury. The Hudson Valley, racist to its bones, primed and prodded by the Birchites and Minute Men, proud of its former and infamous Newburgh mayor, was in no mood to listen, or indeed to debate. Philip was kicked out. The night before he left for a new assignment in the Baltimore ghetto, we had a party to celebrate the publication of his first book, *No More Strangers*.

He was incapable of vengefulness, even in his dark hours, and wasted no time licking his wounds. He set about organizing in the inner city; housing was the main issue locally. So was the war. And in all the troubled days that followed, the poor people stood with him and his friends.

As far as I can recall, the Vatican Council found him interested only to a degree. And I think today how providential his dispassion was; no illusions making for no disillusion. I think both of us were also cooled by our sense of the pervasive cultural illness of the American Church, its illusions about moral superiority, its massive spiritual victimization by racism, cold and hot war fervor, anti-Communism. We both suspected that the Council could offer us only a limited kind of help; and that those who were proceeding on the assumption of instant change from Rome were bound someday to be put down hard.

He was nobody's fool, knowing so well through his own suffering the difference between pronunciamentos and performance. The poor, I think, had conferred on him that wisdom which sees and sees through the big talk of little minds. And his own mind was too lively and encompassing to be bemused by the rhetoric of totalists or tokenists —whether of Church or State.

His gifts had begun to flower in New Orleans. He was, as I came to realize, a good, even an impassioned speaker. He did his homework and wrote well; he was carrying on an old tradition in our family, of making noise, of being congenitally unhappy with phony peace.

I sit in court, and think of the delicious logic which has brought him here. Simply, it is inconceivable that he would have been spared; he is free, lucid and fearless, a man. A public man, who picks his own issues, one or two at a time, one or two, if necessary, even in a lifetime. He would say, I think: if the issue is the right one, one issue is enough, and will lead a man to all the others.

For most Catholics, the war years have been a kind of Dantesque twilight; nothing is clear, phantoms and demons, men and trees, no great evil, no great good. Normalcy and numbers; we fit the cultural landscape so neatly that the President could fairly count on us for a Sunday blessing upon a typical filthy week of war.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DID YOU MISS . . .

MALCOLM BOYD on the underground church

Isidore Silver on RICHARD NIXON

DANIEL CALLAHAN on resistance and herbert marcuse

Kenneth Rexroth and William Clancy on JACQUES MARITAIN

DAVID STEINBERG on the killing of the Orangeburg students

William V. Shannon on THE PRESIDENTIAL PUZZLE

THE SYMPOSIUM on the troubled priest

Francis L. Kunkel on TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

HARVEY COX on the future of the university

Harry Haas on CATHOLICS IN NORTH VIETNAM

—only a few of the meaningful articles which have appeared in recent issues of COMMONWEAL? Send for an introductory trial subscription which will save you 60% of the single copy price.

— — — — — — — — 17 Issues for $2 — — — — — — — —

For New Subscribers Only

COMMONWEAL

232 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. 10016.

Please send the next 17 issues of Commonweal to:

Name .....

Address .....

City, State, Zip .....

☐ I prefer a full year for $9.

4/26/68

Philip is not of that landscape, not of that war; indeed, not of that Church. Which is why he is in this courtroom, on this day. Indeed, the war narrowed, disastrously, the field of options open to all resisters. To all men? It may be. "Men had hoped," writes Brecht, "that someday there might be bread to eat. Now they may hope that one day there may be stones to eat." Stones for bread; the reversal of the old biblical temptation, no longer impure hope; now, for us, for the time of horror, no hope at all.

But despair is not the word for this man. Indeed, in a time of the breaking of men, is it not strange that one hears, in such lives, in such hands, in a room where justice is corrupted and the innocent are under ordeal, the sound of the breaking of bread?

(The judge has accepted a juror who works for the Defense Department and objects in principle to "'modes of protest which destroy property." The judge has seated another, who belongs to the American Legion; another who has a son about to leave for Vietnam. What sort of trial will this be?)

HOCHHUTH'S CHURCHILL

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

ETC.

On Feb. 28, Theatre Toronto staged the English-language premiere of Rolf Hochhuth's *Soldiers* at the Royal Alexandra Theatre with the German author in attendance. The play, which had its German opening in October, and already celebrated because of the Lord Chamberlain's veto of a proposed London production planned by Kenneth Tynan and Sir Laurence Olivier for Britain's National Theatre, seems destined to bestir again some of the hornets set buzzing with the appearance of Hochhuth's indictment of Pius XII, *The Deputy*.

The Toronto production has met with the playwright's enthusiastic approval and with wide critical success. Hochhuth's New York agent, Sanford Jerome Greenburger, is currently negotiating for a New York production, probably involving Tynan and Herman Schumlin, producer-director of Hochhuth's earlier *Deputy*. The play may reach Broadway late in the spring, transplanting the Clifford Williams' Toronto production fairly well intact. Tynan has hopes of bringing the production to London sometime after June, the scheduled date for the welcome demise of the Lord Chamberlain's office. The proposed London production of the National Theatre's literary manager will not appear beneath the marquee of the National Theatre, however, since that theatre's board of trustees remains adamant in its opinion that Hochhuth's play is a libel on Winston Churchill.

Hochhuth presents his play as a play-within-a-play, prelude and dress rehearsal for a production of *The Little London Theatre of the World*. The inner play's di-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rector, Peter Dorland (named, Hochhuth tells us in his introduction, after the presumed author of the Flemish *Elckerlyc*—Everyman), is a former RAF bomber pilot and Wing Commander who was forced to bail out of his damaged plane just after an incendiary raid on Dresden. Summarily apprehended, Dorland was forced by his German captors to pull charred bodies of women and children from the cellar furnaces he had created. One image has haunted his sleepless nights since the war (an image projected on a large screen at the rear of the set), that of a woman forever fixed in a haunting grin.

In 1964, to mark the centenary of the Geneva Convention, Dorland, now a playwright and director, presents his own morality play, a new *Everyman,* within the gutted ruins of Coventry Cathedral, at once symbol of the atrocities of war and birthplace of medieval drama.

Everyman 1964 (or 1968) is the soldier, for, as Hochhuth tells us, "in an age of general conscription and the use of bombs and rockets primarily against the defenseless, a man's conscience is exposed to its most violent ordeals during his years of military service."

Like his late fifteenth-century counterpart, Dorland seeks a companion who will consort with him within the pale of the worms. The "good deed" that will "redeem" him is his production of *The Little London Theatre of the World.* "The play, he hopes," says Hochhuth, "will foster the idea, both among his own generation, his enemies, his fellow pilots of the Second World War, and his son's generation, that the Convention regarding aerial warfare drafted by the Red Cross for the protection of cities should be given the status of international law."

Dorland's *Little London Theatre,* portraying a series of fictional-historical events of the first half of 1943, directly implicates Churchill and the cold, efficient, Mephistophelean Paymaster General, Lord Cherwell, in a plan to make giant furnaces of German cities and in a plot to liquidate Polish Prime Minister Sikorski whose insistence on an investigation into Stalin's involvement in the massacre of 4000 Polish officers at Katyn threatens Allied harmony in the war effort.

This is not the simple case of villainy such a barebones synopsis might suggest. Dorland's (and Hochhuth's) Churchill is a character of complexity confronted with complexity, a mixture of unassailable greatness and too-too solid flesh, engagingly and convincingly portrayed in the sustained impersonation of actor John Colicos. Dorland, appearing in the third act of his own play as the Wing Commander he once was, is confronted by Bishop Bell of Chichester who has been protesting the aerial murder of innocent women and children to the British Prime Minister. "The Prime Minister is a great man," Bell tells Dorland, "and that, in nature, is something terrible." In the bishop's words, Churchill was "the man who did not invent the tank, but went on asking for it until it was invented, . . . and, in the end, he is right, Dorland, that is the point." "The history of our century

What will you give so blind children can read?

Because Xavier Society for the Blind supplies schoolbooks in Braille, Large Type and on Tape, blind children can go to regular schools with their friends who can see. We find textbooks for them that have been transcribed for the blind. And we transcribe into Braille, Large Type or record on Tape any text not otherwise available.

All texts and other special educational materials are given to children who need them, without charge.

But tapes containing up to 3 hours of learning cost $2. Easy-to-use tape recorders cost $40. Materials for printing in Braille or Large Type are costly too.

We can't forget the sightless child. Can you? Will you give so blind children can learn? As little as $2 pays for a tape; $40 for a tape recorder. Please help.

XAVIER SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND
THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC PRESS and LIBRARY FOR THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED Dept.
154 East 23rd Street, New York, N. Y. 10010

Dear Father: Please let me help a blind child learn.

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

will be one and the same as his autobiography," the bishop continues: "That fortune has permitted him to find just the one enemy who, late as it is, identifies Churchill's interests with those of the world at large, that is his destiny."

At rehearsal's end, Dorland's son, an RAF pilot who has been watching the performance, protests his father's insinuations concerning the Sikorski "accident" (significantly, he does not react to the broader theme, the question of saturation bombing). "Greatness has its own dimensions," the elder Dorland retorts: "How can you have the gall to condemn an action simply because you could not have performed it?"

Hochhuth does not seem to want to lay personal blame at Churchill's tombstone. Rather, as Dorland hopes, the view of these events in retrospect will help us to disentangle issues for the future, in a way that history-in-the-making does not allow for.

No doubt we will soon be deluged with attempts to correct Hochhuth's subjective mode of writing history and to finally set the record straight. Those who remember Churchill as the passionate student of history, as the man who wrote to General Ismay during the war to chide him for suggesting unsuitable code-names for proposed military operations lest some widow or mother should have to say that her loved-one had been killed in an operation called "Bunnyhug" or "Ballyhoo," will regard the British statesman as too self-conscious a molder of human history ultimately to escape the indictment of "villain" if Hochhuth's evidence is taken at face value.

There are difficulties with Hochhuth's play in addition to historical ones. There is still too much of the Hyde Park soapboxing of the earlier *Deputy* in this play. As one friend remarked, he would have preferred that the house lights had been left illumined for fifteen minutes after the scheduled curtain, during which time printed booklets detailing the historical data Hochhuth thinks so important for appreciating the situation could be distributed for private reading. And then, hopefully, we might have a less wordy and more concertedly theatrical performance on the stage.

The medieval *Everyman* made no allusions to contemporary persons or events and, it has been argued, any such topicality would have defeated the purpose of the play. The topicality of Hochhuth's *Deputy,* with the ensuing cries of "character assassination," certainly curtailed any successful extraction and examination, especially in the Catholic press, of the more complex moral issues the play supposedly embodied. The more sympathetic portrayal of the protagonist in *Soldiers* may possibly, outside England at least, enable a less impassioned examination of some of those issues. And that, for Hochhuth, seems to be the function of the theatre.

MICHAEL M. DORCY

(Michael M. Dorcy has taught English at St. Louis University. He currently resides in Toronto.)

HIS FAMILY THE WORLD

THE SCREEN

It is interesting that a couple of foreign films now on our screens were so slow in getting here. Perhaps American distributors were reluctant to pay the asking price; and the purchaser of foreign movies, no matter how much he may want to encourage their distribution in this country, does have to watch his finances. These recent arrivals, however you may feel about them, are the work of respected directors and certainly worthy of attention.

Because I was so fascinated by Italian director Ermanno Olmi's "The Sound of Trumpets" and "The Fiancés," I looked forward to his next picture, "And There Came a Man," which was made in 1965 and tells the story of Pope John XXIII. Actually John and Olmi (whose two previous pictures were done in a fine semi-documentary style) should have been a happy combination. But Olmi and Vincenzo Labella, who collaborated on the screenplay, decided that instead of having an actor play John, they would use an Intermediary who would wear ordinary business clothes, appear as the grown-up Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli and reflect his thoughts without actually being Roncalli. While I'm not adverse to innovation in films, this seemingly bright idea just doesn't come off in "And There Came a Man." As the Intermediary, Rod Steiger properly underplays the role in most of his scenes, but gets rather artificial and hammy in his piety when quoting as he does from John's *Journal of a Soul.* Furthermore, try as it will, "Came a Man" just does not succeed in conveying John's greatness.

After the introduction showing the empty throne after Pius' death, the film talks about the election of a "humble priest with the world as his parish," and goes on praising John for his *Peace on Earth*, Vatican II, changing the position of Jews and the Popes' voluntary imprisonment in the Vatican. But after John's death, people suddenly wondered who was this man? Starting with his birth in 1881, the rest of the film attempts to explain Roncalli. Except for Steiger and Adolfo Celi (as Bishop of Bergamo, Radini-Tedeschi) the cast are all non-professionals and it is they, under Olmi's direction who give the picture its greatest vitality. Angelo's boyhood and youth with his family and neighbers, all photographed in extraordinary lovely color, are warmly portrayed. The last half of the film about Roncalli, the priest and the bishop, is done somewhat sketchily as it skips along: Bergamo, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece, Paris, Venice. But a man whose parish is the world should move us more than does this film's Intermediary. Just about the time "And There Came a Man" opened in this country, a project by the National Catholic Office of Motion Pictures for the making of a new movie about John was announced.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Let's hope it captures the man and the saint. In the meantime, we'll settle for the Italian movie—dubbed voices and all.

Accattone, the title character in Pier Paolo Pasolini's movie, is a pimp, a scrounger, a beggar, a thoroughly disreputable young man, but Pope John would have understood him and worked to help him. It's hard to figure out why this 1961 Pasolini picture, which was on display at the 1966 New York Film Festival, has not been released in this country until now. "Accattone" is by no means a pleasant movie as it follows the machinations of this seemingly-heartless procurer who lives off a prostitute until she is thrown in jail, who hangs around with his fellow idlers (and perhaps fellow pimps) in the slum neighborhoods on the outskirts of Rome, who refuses to work until he falls in love with a young girl unwilling to become one of his whores, and then he discovers he physically can't do hard labor so he turns to robbery which finishes him off. But strangely enough, and thanks mainly to Pasolini's excellent direction of a non-professional cast and his neo-realist style, "Accattone" is an extremely moving film. Not for one minute do you approve of this criminal (well played by Franco Citti), but you are filled with compassion for him, for his girls, for the wastrels he hangs out with. Obviously "Accattone" is not a movie for everyone, but it is for audiences interested in good film making, for sociologists, and I should think for the religious. No one who sees it will be surprised that three years later Pasolini could make what is to date the finest life of Christ: "The Gospel According to Matthew."

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

BOOKS

A romping set in a square New England town

Couples

JOHN UPDIKE

Knopf, $6.95

JOSH GREENFELD

John Updike is perhaps our most writerly writer. He has the eye of a Ted Williams; nothing can get by it: the amber shading of a drink, the garnet coloring of kitchen wallpaper, "the valentine brightness of plow-heaped snow." He can begin sentences in more ways than are demonstrated in a composition exercise manual. And he can bring to a description of anything, from the stolid architecture of a white-faced old New England church to the delicate pubic fleece above the "roseate brown vulva" of a young New England matron, all of the energy and enthusiasm of a Victorian novelist confronting his first sunset.

Like a Victorian novelist, too, he knows how to invest—or inflate—a worldly narrative with the proper touch of mythic and theological ballast so that it might more easily waft its fluttering way into literature. And above all, in his still youthful maturity, he even seems to have found a theme, a leitmotiv that one can pick out in his work, as both relevant and recurring: the difficulty any man, especially an essential Calvinist and Puritan, has in finding a one-stop service station for all of his spiritual and physical, diverse and perverse needs in regard to the female. For example, he requires at once a mother and a wife, a mistress and a lover, an upright pillar of the community and a down and dirty sex partner, a personification of gentility and a suppository of vulgarity at its most venturesome; hence his inability to really make a lasting commitment to any one woman, the arduous adjustments he must try to make after his pre-destined fashion.

Not surprisingly, when it has all come together marvelously—tools and talent, theme and theology, finely controlled as in a "Rabbit Run" or an "On The Farm" and in some of his short stories —the result has been such that very few practitioners—or admirers—of the art of fiction can help gasping with envy. But unfortunately, *Couples*, the new Updike, for all its bright and fancy trimmings, is a bird—or a pigeon—of another feather. For it is one of those books that proves again, only all too sadly, that you don't have to be a bad writer to come up with an awful novel; that you can be a good writer and still pull one off, with a little bit of bad luck.

In case you haven't heard by now, the ten couples whose lives Updike limns—and maligns—form a swinging set in a square New England town (and we all know about New England towns) on the Massachusetts South Shore just beyond the easy commute reaches of Boston. These couples are involved in all manner of activity but mostly they're caught up in wife swapping, or in working their way up toward a fuller participation in that ultimate of suburban sports and pastimes. For the first third of the novel or so the characters are as difficult to differentiate and keep track of without a scorecard as the Natashas and Mitkas that flit diminutively through a Russian novel. But gradually the novel shakes down to its burden, the extra-marital fling of a central couple: a willowy pregnant blue stocking and a squat Cotton Mather-mouthed Dutch builder.

This couple, Foxy and Piet, rather joylessly romp in "the post pill paradise" over hill and dale of wooden plot somehow getting ensnarled in the most usual of pre-pill twists and turns until inevitably and ironically they are forced into

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

making the final choice they deserve—each other. (They could have evidently done worse: some of the other couples vanish into analysis, move on to Cleveland, or are simply sundered by death.)

Each of the score or so of characters, if one is keeping symbolic score, does represent a varying stage or manifestation of the moral decay ringing the inferno—or bathtub—that is twentieth-century American society. For example, Piet, though he comes on like a Dutch cleanser, is the basic bull that resides in every male and Foxy represents the sly, wily, inscrutably deep and indomitably wild feminine bovine spirit. But very few of the characters pulse with genuine life. Angela, Piet's wife, is the best rendered and most fully realized character in the novel perhaps just because she is supposed to be suffering from a psychic numbing and bedrock lifelessness.

That the basic story is both frail and familiar and that the multitudinous characters are both dull and lack distinction are not, however, sufficient causes to explain just why this novel must be assigned to a literary disaster area: lesser novelists and writers than Updike have written better novels even operating under similar handicaps. The real reason for its excruciating failure stems, I think, from a rare lack of creative luck coupled with an exceptional lapse of critical taste. What I mean is this:

Anyone who's ever written—or tried to write—a novel knows there are always blind passages, detours into no-outline land so to speak, where the writer suddenly finds himself pushing ahead uncertainly, trusting only to a kind of author's instinctive radar that he'll find his way back onto his novel's main course with the work somehow all the richer for the side trips; that he will, in a Hemingway sense, luck out after his search and create operation. In *Couples,* I think, Updike indulged in many dicey curlicues—and lost continually. So instead of finally delivering—and delving deeply into—the two core characters the novel should have been all about, he became hung up with the drab secondary characters about whom the novel now goes dizzily all around. And not even Updike's best friend, his usually fine and precise critical sense, seems to have pointed out to him what was happening.

These excursions—which include not only a pre-occupation with background characters but also an insistence, for example, in reporting at length some funless word games—account for serious further damage. Just as they fail to enrich the novel, they also bloat and distend it to some 458 pages, a length Updike has never ventured before, and thus cause to be revealed for the first time two severe limitations in the otherwise loaded Updike talent arsenal: a basically weak sense of humor and a terribly clotted ear for dialogue. It is almost as if in the past, dealing with fewer characters in shorter works, Updike had been able to mask these defects through his virtuoso descriptive word-twirling and flashy sense of fable.

All of the various—and variant—characters in *Couples* speak in the same other-worldly, artificial, philosophy-minor divinity student diction, no matter how much or how little schooling they've had or what part of the country they originally came from. For example, Piet, the Michigan contractor without a college education, can cry out to one of his lesser concubines—he passes through five all together in the course of the novel: "Don't make me leave you. You're what guards my soul. I'll be damned eternally." The same durable and potent builder of Dutch descent can also report to his primary love: "Foxy. After years of thought, I have come to this conclusion: there are two kinds of situation in the world, those we can do something about and those we can't, like the stars and death. And I decided it's a great waste, a sin in fact, to worry about what we can't help." And a page later he even defines—or justifies—adultery on a sophisticatedly donnish level: "It's a way of giving yourself adventures. Of getting out in the world and seeking knowledge." All of this from a man who keeps complaining that he doesn't have a college degree. But with Updike writing his speeches, obviously he doesn't need one.

Perhaps the key giveaway to the absence of a faithful ear is the constant resorting to forced transitional phrases such as: "Speaking of . . ." or "I didn't mean to barge in but . . ." These are the phrases that always may sound right and handy in the study to an author trying to introduce a third character or to change a subject, but in life, if one listens carefully, people dispense with justifying their cues: they simply speak of or they just barge in. In the field of humor, for all of the torturous fun and games the characters entertain themselves with, I found I think, but two mildly entertaining puns and I did not run across a single purposefully genuine comic observation or situation.

And so *Couples* is like a drone with many characters and much talk of sex and even a little practice of it. But most of the sex seems just that: practice—extended dry runs without moist orgiastic joy. In fact, Updike's explorations into sex in this novel are largely—and literally—oral ones, almost tempting one to suggest that Frank Harris seems to have been his most important influence and guide into this last well publicized frontier of the novel. In much the same vein, on the basis of *Couples* alone, it would be easy to compare, just as the young Updike used to be compared to the young O'Hara—they both sprang from the same Pennsylvania turf onto the same *New Yorker* pages—the current Updike to the current O'Hara. Or to point out that just as it was once possible to think of Updike as potentially a native American Nabakov, *Couples* argues cogently that it might now be more appropriate to consider him as a waspish David Slavitt.

However, respect for Updike's past work and achievements demands that one must be Christian, one cannot be Cavalier. Everyone goofs, everyone's entitled to a dud: after all didn't Hemingway get all tangled up in over half of *To Have and Have Not?* And every writer once in a while forgets his strong points and boxes himself into a position wherein he has to function with his weakest tools.

Fortunately too, if one explosion can launch a literary career one bomb cannot destroy one—and this bomb will be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a whopping commercial success. Perhaps even surpassing the sales records garnered by *Peyton Place* and *Valley of the Dolls* for here, at last, is crap that can come on as quality, *merde* that can be labeled as Kosher for cultural ingest. Indeed, ironically and hopefully, *Couples* could well provide the secure financial base from which Updike can fuel what still must be judged, in spite of his flaws and this *faux pas,* as a serious and important and worthwhile literary quest.

Theological Ethics

HELMUT THIELICKE

Fortress, $12.50

JOHN G. MILHAVEN, S.J.

Those who follow the course of "the new morality" and the theology of secular Christianity will welcome the appearance in English of a first volume of Helmut Thielicke's *Theological Ethics.* The German theologian sets out in depth and massively systematic detail the foundations of a situation ethics befitting the man who has chosen both to believe in Christ and to involve himself in the world.

Like other proponents of situation ethics, Thielicke deliberately chooses extreme cases. May the German Christian, living under the Nazis, lie and violate laws in order to hide his Jewish neighbor? May the concentration camp prisoners follow orders and determine who among them are "unfit" and to be executed? Or should they refuse and bring on the sanctions threatened by the SS, which will involve greater loss of life? May a Christian take an oath of loyalty to an inhuman, totalitarian state? Should university officials carry out unjust denazification commands of the Allied occupation? Or should they refuse and see their school closed depriving the youth of the country of badly needed education?

These cases reflect, of course, the years when Thielicke began to write. While Dietrich Bonhoeffer was writing his letters and papers in a Berlin prison, the Nazis interned Thielicke in a remote part of southern Germany. There he began his *Theologische Ethik* which came to an end twenty-one years and 3200 pages later; in his own words, "probably the most extensive work on ethics that has ever been written."

Nevertheless, in these pages where he is laying foundations, the cases of conscience arising under Nazis and de-Nazifiers and Communists do not interest Thielicke for themselves. In confronting extreme cases, one is forced in desperation to find some one thing that really matters and must be retained at all costs. The Christian finds only one such thing: his faith. And his faith is simply his acceptance of the fact that God, speaking through his Son, has told him that He loves him. The belief removes anxiety, but spontaneously, irresistibly, grows into love—for God and for men, whom God loves.

Since, as the borderline cases illustrate, a loving faith is all that unconditionally matters, no one, not even the Christian ethician, can lay down laws or rules absolutely binding the Christian. In extreme cases and everyday decisions alike, the Christian needs the courage to take on the responsibility of "loving and doing what he wants." Thielicke, with Luther, calls it the freedom of the Christian man, and points out that it is not popular with modern man. The Christian cannot take "flight into obedience, into the quest for authority, into the security of the functionary." An authentic Christian ethics, bringing out this freedom, makes moral decision not easier, but more difficult.

Unlike a good deal of the Protestant tradition, but like the great thinkers who charted a new direction for Protestant theology after the First World War (Barth, Brunner, Bultmann, Gogarten, Tillich), Thielicke underscores that the Christian's love is no mere interior disposition, but decisive action in the world. To exercise the freedom of love, therefore, in his individual situation, the Christian must turn his attention to the human, historical reality in which he lives. He must study the structures of the world which limit the free play of man's action, e.g., in marriage, politics, economic competition, labor-management relations. At each step, he

The first evidence of
a new commitment to publishing
about the religious quest—

The best view of the whole scene:
The Religious Situation: 1968
1024 pp. $15.00

A fresh look at one great tradition:
The Catholic Crisis
BY THOMAS F. O'DEA $5.95

An iconoclastic revision of Luther:
The Theses Were Not Posted
BY ERWIN ISERLOH $5.95

Beacon Press Boston 02108

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

must ask the relation of the structures to God and therewith to man as a creature of God. Paradoxically, in spelling out in this way the "worldliness" of Christianity, Thielicke takes up "a new subject matter which Reformation theology, to its hurt, has thus far avoided —though Roman Catholic theology has always found a place for it."

But his extreme examples dramatize something about the world that both Roman Catholic moral theology and liberal Protestantism have neglected, but which, again, the great current of Protestant theology since the First World War has trumpeted and orchestrated. "Christian ethics is eschatological or it is nothing." God's Kingdom has come and still is not yet here. The world of men and its structures, therefore, are provisional and passing, in tension with God's will, resisting and yet needing and waiting for Him. In the conflict cases, one sees clearly how man's world is still a fallen one: all the alternatives lying before the Christian are sinful, just as the Christian himself, being part of the world, is also sinful through and through. The conflict situations exemplify how the Christian, no matter what he does, inevitably does harm or fails to do some good, thus bringing on himself further guilt, and how, within himself, he inevitably fails in love.

He can never make a decision with a good conscience. The concentration camp prisoners must decide either to cooperate in the murder of the unfit or to refuse to share the responsibility of those trying to prevent greater slaughter. It is always the same: "There is no such thing as a wholly just war, and my decision to endorse a given war and participate in it can be made only from the standpoint that I see, or think I see, greater wrong on the one side than the other, and that when I plunge into this confused tangle of unrighteousness I do so in the confident assurance of God's forgiveness."

Situation ethics is no exclusively Christian phenomenon. Germain Grisez is probably right in identifying it as simply one modification of a more general trend which he calls "situationism" and which dominates all contemporary ethics except in the islands where the natural law tradition has survived. No review can do justice to Thielicke's massive synthesis. One can only say lamely that at times it exasperates and wearies the reader wandering down the labyrinth of refined argument, refutation, distinction, developed often in the best and worst scholastic manner, and that at times it provokes thought and illumines, and when the reader reaches the last page, it leaves him with an impressive glimpse of where Christian ethics, Catholic and Protestant, may well be going now.

Politics and the Early Christian

FRANCIS X. MURPHY

Desclee, $3.50

PAUL J. WEBER

When Jesus spoke the words, "Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's," he was brewing up a political storm. For 20 centuries Western men have struggled without notable success to implement, to overcome, or just to ignore his words. In the face of a revitalized Church whose priests and laymen are involved in civil rights, the Vietnam protest, medico-moral legislations and educational funding, even the eighteenth-century compromises are proving increasingly inadequate. Perhaps at no time since the pre-Augustinian era have the representatives of both Church and State been so uncertain about their own proper spheres of influence.

In this circumstance it is important to return to the sources and rediscover the principles evolved from the initial encounter of Christianity and the Roman Empire. In *Politics and the Early Christian,* Francis X. Murphy does just this. He takes as his text, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things will be given to you besides." Starting with the Hellenistic experience, particularly the Homeric man (Plato rates one page, Aristotle two), Father Murphy moves to the Hebrew background, then works through the writings of the sub-apostolic Fathers, the apologetes and the early theologians, concluding with Ambrose and Augustine.

The hard core of ancient political speculation, according to the author, revolved around two ideas: "Whatever may be the technical exegesis of the *regnum Dei,* it is obvious that it did not represent a secular state in Christ's use of the term; it is likewise evident that God's justice, . . . far transcends the relationship of spiritual and secular reciprocity embodied in the aphorism 'suum cuique tribue' . . . as well as the virtue of honesty that is involved in the worldly ideal of justice."

What then did the *regnum Dei* and Justice mean for the early Christian? Both are to be found in a transtemporal sphere. "What is involved essentially in the Christian attitude toward politics is a commitment to the things of this world on the part of one who recognizes the present creation as instinct with mystery—the mystery of man's impermanence on this globe and his insatiable seeking after justice." At the same time, concludes Father Murphy, the early Church, like its successor, had no true theology of politics. Rather what Augustine and his predecessors did was *judge* the accomplishments and failures of man's political experiences by the norms of the love of God and one's fellowmen.

Only one acquainted with the fragmentary evidence for this turbulent period of history can adequately appreciate the difficult synthesis the author has attempted. The bringing together of such diverse writings is valuable, but the book suffers in several respects. For one thing the title is misleading. The author is more interested in theories than in Christians. He never gets down to the nitty-gritty of politics as they hit early Christians, but rather analyzes the writings of the era.

Much more important are several errors and lacunae. Early in the book the author writes, "Coming out of the mirage of prehistory onto the stage of the great world empires, the Jewish people had a theocratic government; and by this they were ruled immediately through Moses and the judges and the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prophets." He continues that when the people grew tired of such rule they agitated for a king. However, the prophets in no sense ever ruled the Jewish people, and there is no historical record of the existence of prophets until well after the kingship was established.

Later in speaking of Hippolytus of Rome, Father Murphy makes the statement, "When . . . [Callistus] . . . was elected pope, Hippolytus started his own church as the first anti-pope; but in the salt mines of Sardinia, he was reconciled with Callistus and died a martyr in 235." Callistus died 15 years *before* Hippolytus was sent to the salt mines where he became reconciled with Pope Pontianus.

The two lacunae most notable are the author's nontreatment of pacifism and nondiscussion of the Church's struggle to institutionalize its charism. Both had profound influence on the growth of political thought in the era. In a lone reference to pacifism Father Murphy seems to accept the popular but erroneous view that the early Church was pacifist. Unfortunately it wasn't. While several writers (all tinged with heresy) did profess pacifism, the mainstream opposition of the Church to military service came from the requirement that soldiers sacrifice to idols before battle, and from the fact that the enlistment period was 26 years, during which a soldier was not allowed to marry. (The Fathers felt this did not easily lend itself to good Christian living.) Nevertheless, the pacifist writings of such men as Lactantius and Justin Martyr were important and influential.

Concerning the second lacuna: the seminal development of canon law in the various collections and decretals gave the Church an internal juridical structure which enabled it to survive the demise of the Roman Empire. The impact of this development on Christian political theory has not yet been sufficiently evaluated, but was probably considerable.

Since pacifism and an institutionalized charism are as important for political theory in our day as they were in the early Church, one wishes Father Murphy had seen fit to discuss them.

Finally, although one would not ordinarily comment on the foreword to a book, the fact that this one was written by Hubert H. Humphrey is worthy of note. It was nice of the Vice-President to take time out to write a foreword for his "friend, Father Murphy." Let's hope that he and the author will someday agree on whether the book covers the period from Christ to Augustine, as Mr. Humphrey states, or from Homer to Augustine as the author claims.

Granted these minor difficulties, Father Murphy has made a substantial contribution to the understanding of a fascinating and significant period of history.

No Man's Time

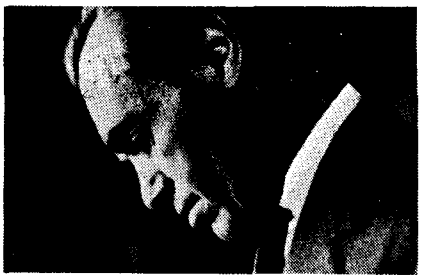
V. S. YANOVSKY

Weybright & Tally, $5

ANNE FREMANTLE

In this novel, situated half in the "fairytale" world of an unidentified village on the Canadian border, and half in the "nonsense world" of Chicago and New York, Basil Yanovsky poses the old question "Who am I?" Cornelius Yamb is searching for the lost Bruno, heir to an immense fortune. But he finds himself taken for Conrad Jamb, husband, father and deacon, in the perilous northern village at which he arrives one summer evening.

Which is he, really? Either, neither, or both these characters? His supposed wife's blind father is the village preacher, and he discusses Conrad-Cornelius' problem in the light of St. Paul's statement that "there are many members, but one body." Take Matilda, the preacher says (Matilda, red-cheeked, bosomy, was completely gray, her aged, empty body "as appetizing as a warmed-over dish"). "Matilda may change her mind in a year. Today she sins, tomorrow she may sacrifice herself. Who is she? Where is she? In what is she? Somebody insists he is Cornelius, but he is taken for Conrad . . . A bachelor! Somewhere though, there are wife and children. What is the last criterion? Consciousness, memory, success? Fiddlesticks."

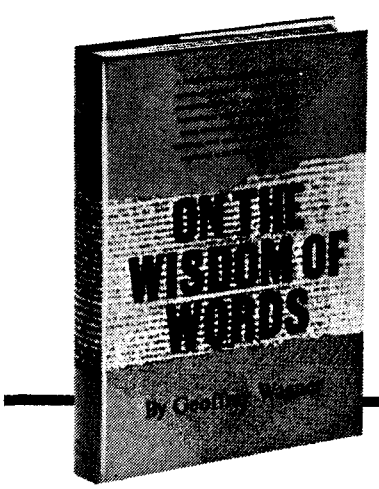


Geoffrey Wagner

ON THE WISDOM OF WORDS

Geoffrey Wagner, author of more than twenty books and Consultant to Hayakawa's *Language in Thought and Action*, comes to the defense of words. In the face of mounting McLuhanism, political doubletalk, and unthink, he believes that language is still an important form of human communication. This vivacious, learned book is his standard, his call to arms.

ON THE WISDOM OF WORDS has the entertaining yet fundamentally serious quality of *Games People Play*. It will appeal to a wide range of word-lovers who view the future of the word with much misgiving. $6.75



Van Nostrand
120 Alexander Street
Princeton, N.J. 08540

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The Survivors"

A 16MM SOUND AND COLOR DOCUMENTARY FILM OF VIETNAM

THE COMMITTEE OF RESPONSIBILITY who sponsor this film are engaged in an effort to alleviate suffering in Vietnam, through concerned doctors and laymen in the U.S., in bringing a number of the most seriously burned and wounded children to this country for treatment.

The film runs 15 minutes. It is available for showing to organizations and groups in clubs, schools and homes. *Call or write:*

The Committee of Responsibility

60 Madison Ave. New York City 10010

212-889-4210

COMMONWEAL issues out of stock may be obtained, at 5¢ a page, $3 minimum, from:

Xerox University Microfilms

300 N. Zeeb Road

Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106

TEGAWITHA

CATHOLIC CAMP FOR GIRLS, 6-16

Atop the Poconos. On private lake. All land sports, swimming, riding, dramatics, dancing, crafts, tutoring. 8 or 4 weeks. Private chapel on grounds.

51st Year

For catalog, address:

Mrs. James P. Lynch, Director
Camp Tegawitha, Box G
Tobyhanna, Pa.

Just as Conrad, rising from his pew excitedly, expects his putative father-in-law to initiate him, fighting breaks out in the church gallery. Later, the preacher resumes, explaining St. Paul in terms of Nils Bohr. When the devil sends an infinite number of weary travelers to an inn whose infinite number of rooms are all taken up, the innkeeper gets the better of the devil by putting the "infinite multitude of his former guests into the infinity of the even numbers, while the newcomers were given the infinity of the odd-numbered rooms."

In the preacher's village, as crippled supposed-son Thomas tells Conrad-Cornelius, there are thirteen days, those between the 1st and 13th of January, when the calendar stops. In this "No Man's Time," geared to the difference between the Western and the old Russian calendars, "the natives could retrace their own steps, correct their voluntary or involuntary errors, transfigure the past, and change what had been done into what never was."

These natives are hostile to Conrad-Cornelius, threatening him because they think he is another spy sent among them. They propose to hack him up at the sawmill and wash his body down the stream. His supposed-wife, Ipata, saves him. He thereupon seduces her sister, Yanina, who is the keeper of the missing Bruno, or, as he calls himself, We. We-Bruno, child of a German-Jewish millionaire, was being variously sought by many people, for varying motives, none good. Some of these had hired Conrad, who persuades We-Bruno to return to Chicago with him with Yanina. We-Bruno is "corpulent, short of breath, of olive-hue, with protruding buck eyes and blown-up, barrel-like chest."

We-Bruno remembers pre-lapsarian life. "We has no beginning and therefore existed before this phase of the earth," he tells Conrad. He alone is without the phantom pain, that felt by every amputee in his vanished limb, which is suffered by all human beings separated from God. We-Bruno "offering Conrad his warm, moist swollen palm" is led by Conrad and Yanina to be sold for 5,000 smackers, and is killed, senselessly and almost by mistake, by a group of football players. He had been fading, as though molting, in so-called civilization. Yanina bears Conrad twin sons and a daughter but her face grows yellow, waxen, stony. Conrad leaves her for Yolanda. Yanina and her three children are burned to death in New York, after which Cornelius goes back to the Perilous Village, to be welcomed once more by Ipata.

We-Bruno, Ipata and the preacher all deliver the same message, though Bruno's vision is the artist's, Ipata's that of the *Ewig Weibliche*. The preacher explains that "God is light. Light is diffused in waves . . . What is matter? Particle or wave? Particle and wave and still something else. . . . Autonomous individuals call themselves I, like cells of a sick body they separate." We-Bruno, unseparated, remembers all the trillion years of his "vertical past" when he was a flaxen child on the shores of a suspended three-faceted ocean. Yet "the past lies before us, not behind . . . the point of the present moves along the curve of time . . . the point moves along a line from I to We. . . . Personality is continuous motion, is the way, is the tendency." Causality is out.

Dr. Yanovsky is of the generation of Vladimir Nabokov and, like him, loves to astound and confound his readers with a barrage of words and of ideas. He too was in the circle, if not in the following, of Berdyaev. To sound theology he has added the advantage of a scientific training—he is a medical doctor. His novel can be read on many levels, from a parable of Everyman and the human predicament to a sacro-scientific mystery story.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

REVIEWERS

JOSH GREENFELD is a free-lance writer and critic.

FATHER JOHN G. MILHAVEN, S.J. is professor of ethics at Woodstock College in Maryland.

PAUL J. WEBER teaches political science at St. Louis University.

ANNE FREMANTLE, author, anthologist and critic, edited *The Age of Belief*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 163)

to eat meat on Friday or else everything is permitted. There is another way, namely, to adopt a provisional, tentative style which can incarnate without absolutizing and let go when its usefulness is done. But this is only possible if our tentative incarnations do not have to be divinized but are grounded on a deeper reality which can keep them provisional and relative: not just man, not yet just God, but both of man and of God, and this I take it is the definition of Incarnation. The reality which makes possible Incarnation is, if Mr. Callahan will consult the first chapter of Matthew (v. 18), the Holy Spirit. ROSEMARY RUETHER

Reply

I have no problem at all with Dr. Ruether's desire to relativize the Church. Contrary to her impression of my article, I don't think the choice concerning the Church is either-or. I fully agree with her that a middle ground between abolishment and absolutization can be found, and I think she has done a good job in sketching the outline of a provisional church. My problem is with her absolutization of the Spirit, which she seems to think does not need to stand under the judgment of human reason and experience. It seems to me that it is this latter kind of judgment which has enabled us, of late, to see how relative the church actually is. We don't need an absolutized Spirit, much less one defined as an "imageless void," to tell us the church is relative; we only need open our eyes to see that.

Rosemary Ruether has helped us to open our eyes when we look at the church. But I want to keep them open when I am looking at the notion of "Spirit" also. Perhaps "grace according to the best theological tradition is precisely the 'presence of the Spirit' "; I'm perfectly willing to concede she has the tradition right here. I'm just not, I'm sorry to say, willing to stand blind and senseless before this tradition. I say this for two reasons: first, this tradition may be one we will have to reconsider if it cannot any longer pass some basic tests of human judgment. I want to keep that option open to Christians. Can one say, without sounding arrogant, that if humans must stand under the judgment of the "Spirit," the "Spirit" must also stand under some human judgments? If one can, that's what I would like to say. Second, I fear that the vagueness and abstractness of Dr. Ruether's Spirit language is all but useless for the practical purposes of deterring us from absolutizing the Church. Unless one can say more precisely than she has what the Spirit is, and what concrete tests of human meaning and experience it is open to, I don't see how the Church could ever in fact know it had been judged.

Dr. Ruether wants a dialectic of Spirit and history, of "God" and human "works." But a dialectic requires that both poles have some meaning. Unfortunately, she has so drained "Spirit" and "God" of any concrete meaning that the dialectic turns out to be a chimera, vanishing the minute one tries to take a close look at the Spirit-God pole. The existence of "a deeper reality," upon which we are supposed to build our "tentative incarnations," looks like an illusion. The troubling question here, for me at least, is whether it *looks* like an illusion only because Dr. Ruether has been unfortunate in her choice of words and images to talk about it—or whether, more seriously, the whole Christian tradition she tries to articulate is dead (rhetorically of course it's alive). Not very long ago, we took it for granted that the Church is absolute. Now many of us no longer believe it is, among them Dr. Ruether and myself. But she wants to draw a line in our relativizing when we reach the concept of the "Spirit." I just can't see any earthly reason for doing so. I use the word "earthly" with deliberation; that is where I get my reasons.

I realize that such a confession is, within the circle of Dr. Ruether's Christian tradition, a hanging offense. I may run around a bit on the gallows, but my neck is ready. DANIEL CALLAHAN

"The most important documentary study on America's participation in and responsibility for the war in Vietnam."
—HENRY STEELE COMMAGER

IN THE NAME OF AMERICA

A Study Commissioned and Published by Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam

"This book is a fundamental challenge to anyone, whatever his preconceptions about the American presence in Vietnam.
—NAT HENTOFF

"It is a saddening experience to read the evidence collected in this impressive book. One can only feel shame and horror — that these things have happened, that we have permitted them to happen."—NOAM CHOMSKY

Cloth, $4.95; Paper, $2.95

At all bookstores or write direct to Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 547, New York 10027.

Distributed by E. P. DUTTON & CO.

Publisher's Secretary

Catholic magazine, N.Y. City, needs asst. Exp. or bright beginner. Corresp., steno. or rapid notes. Record-keeping, receiving books and mss. Good salary, pleasant office, fringes. Box 426, Commonweal.

A PRIEST IN INDIA desperately needs financial assistance toward completion of the construction and furnishing of a hospital in a poverty stricken community. For further information, or to send a much appreciated donation, write to:

Fr. Raphael Komaranchat
Kunnam, P.O.
Mavelikara—2
Kerala, South India

Airmail, 25c, ½ oz.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GABRIEL MORAN

"—a man passionately devoted to community . . . a Christian radically committed to freedom. To the work of Christian education he brings the trained intelligence of a brilliant theologian and the invaluable experience of a seasoned educator."

☐ Vision and Tactics
Toward An Adult Church

Brother Moran's theologically sophisticated critique of religious education envisions a complete revolution transforming catechetics from a child-catering to an adult-shaping witness. The tactics include an essential overhaul, eliminating those structures and practices which, however "new," simply perpetuate fragmentation and illusion. "It is a book honed from the experience of revelation, community, and freedom, and will undoubtedly touch many of us with the 'shock of recognition' that Herman Melville pointed to as the electric effect of genius. The multiple creative options he suggests to religious educators in America are a rare and challenging gift to the church."—*Maria Harris*
cloth $3.95, paper $1.95

Also by Gabriel Moran:

☐ **Theology of Revelation**
"A laudable work of theologizing in the light of contemporary biblical and philosophical developments."—*Catholic Biblical Quarterly* $4.95

☐ **Catechesis of Revelation**
"There will come a time, no doubt, when it will be looked upon as a basic document in catechetics."—*Long Island Catholic* $4.50

Also from Herder and Herder:

☐ Timothy S. McDermott
Beyond Questions and Answers: The Creed for Today's Catholic
The old questions and answers of the catechism are given a fresh light and a refreshingly original interpretation in this readable and unique contribution. $4.95

☐ Maurice Bellet
Facing the Unbeliever
Preface by Bernard Cooke. A brilliant study of the phenomenon commonly called "loss of faith," and an appeal to believers for understanding-from-the-inside when they communicate with those who find themselves unable to believe. $3.95

☐ Pierre Babin
Options
"Another outstanding contribution to the religious education of adolescents. This book is a must for every interested teacher of religion."—*Religion Teachers Journal* $3.95

☐ John F. Murphy
The Catechetical Experience
This honest and creative appraisal of a catechist and his adolescent class offers important insights into theme development, adolescent psychology, and pedagogy. $3.95

☐ Jacques Audinet
Forming the Faith of Adolescents
Introduction by Gabriel Moran. This knowledgeable introduction to catechetical theory and methods aims at forming a mature faith in adolescents. Audinet offers a close analysis of catechetical dynamics and practical suggestions for successful presentation. $3.50

☐ Pierre Babin
Methods
"A thoughtful book . . . eminently serviceable as well. It succeeds both on the theoretical and practical levels."—*Long Island Catholic* $3.95

HERDER AND HERDER
232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016

At your bookseller or from the publisher.
Please send the books checked above.
$_____ enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

C

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED